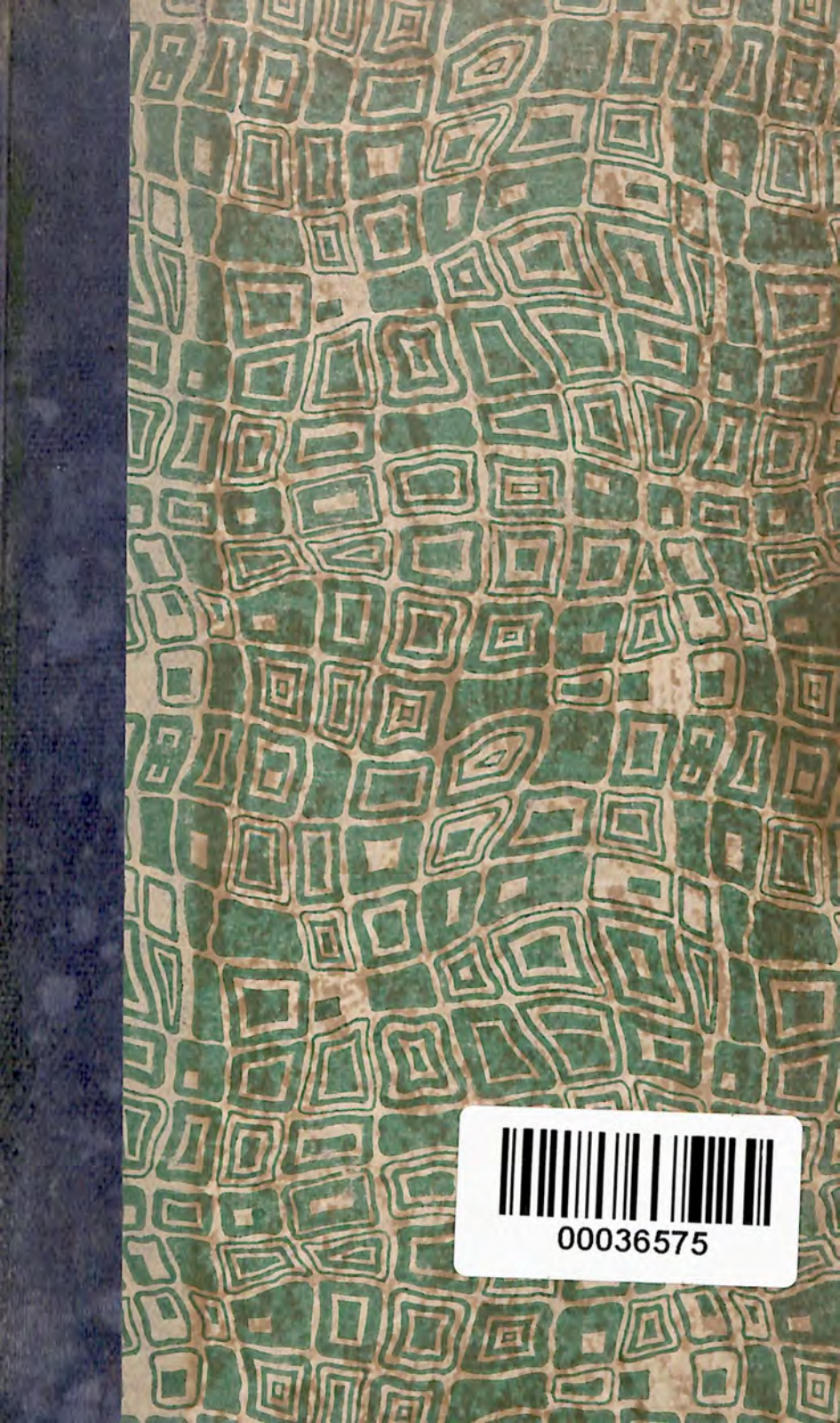
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MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE

OF

SIR WALTER RALEGH

WITH SOME ACCOUNT

OF

THE PERIOD IN WHICH HE LIVED

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BY

MRS. A. T. THOMSON,

AUTHOR OF

MEMOIRS OF THE COURT OF HENRY THE EIGHTH.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN, AND GREEN,

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1830.

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LONDON:
Printed by A. & R. Spottiswoode,
New-Street-Square.

ADVERTISEMENT.

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In submitting to the Public a Life of Sir Walter Ralegh, some brief explanation may be deemed expedient, of the reasons which induced the Author to consider such a work necessary, when the valuable labours of Oldys, Cayley, and Birch, are still in existence.

Independent of the circumstance, that the efforts of these justly-prized biographers have been far too greatly actuated by an indiscriminate partiality for the character of Ralegh, it may be alleged, that the narratives of the two first of these authors are encumbered with authentic, but heavy documents and dissertations, interspersed within the body of their respective works, rendering them fatiguing; and, in the case of Oldys, almost revolting to the general reader. The concise compilation of Birch, admirable as far as it goes, is, on the other hand, too limited and cursory a sketch of

the life and actions of Ralegh, to afford that satisfactory picture of his mind, and disposition, which biography is intended to furnish.

Endeavouring to steer between these extremes, the Author of the Memoirs, now presented to the Public, entertains a well-grounded hope, that if her attempt to compose a full, and yet connected, narrative of Ralegh's life be considered inefficient, the additional documents which she has been enabled to supply will redeem it from being wholly useless. In the Appendix to this work, she presents to the Public fifteen original Letters, now for the first time printed, from the collection in the State Paper Office. These, whilst they throw but little new light upon the participation of Sir Walter Ralegh in certain public affairs, are valuable, as confirming, in a manner satisfactory to the inquirer after historical truth, the impressions previously conceived of the share which he took in the political transactions of his times.

For permission to peruse and transcribe these interesting papers, the Author has to express her grateful acknowledgments to the Right Honourable Robert Peel, whose liberality in

this instance is as gratifying to the lovers of English literature, from the zeal for its interests which it evinces in that distinguished Statesman, as it is eminently beneficial to the humble, but earnest labourer in pursuit of historical knowledge.

The Author has also considerable pleasure in expressing her obligations to ROBERT LEMON, Esq., Deputy Keeper of the State Papers, for the polite and prompt assistance which he afforded to her, enabling her to reap the full benefit of the privilege conferred by Mr. PEEL.

3. *Hinde Street, Manchester Square,*
April 15. 1830.

" A man, that Fortune's buffets and rewards
Hath ta'en with equal thanks." — HAMLET.

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LIFE

OF

SIR WALTER RALEGH.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND ORIGIN OF RALEGH: — HIS EDUCATION AND CHOICE OF A PROFESSION: — HIS SERVICES IN FRANCE AND THE LOW COUNTRIES: — MARITIME ENTERPRIZES: — HIS SERVICES IN IRELAND: — HIS RETURN TO COURT: — CHARACTERS WITH WHOM HE HAD TO DEAL. — EXPEDITIONS TO NEWFOUNDLAND — TO VIRGINIA. — PROOFS OF FAVOUR FROM THE QUEEN. — RALEGH'S OCCUPATIONS IN PEACE: — HIS PATRONAGE OF HAKLUYT AND HERRIOT. — CHARGE OF DEISM AGAINST RALEGH FROM VARIOUS WRITERS.

1552 to 1586.

The county of Devon was renowned, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, for the valour of its inhabitants in naval services; and it is still honoured as the birth-place of three celebrated navigators, Sir Francis Drake, Sir John Hawkins, and Sir Walter Ralegh. Ralegh was born in the year 1552, at Hayes, a farm rented by his father,

situated in the parish of Budely, near that part of the eastern coast of Devonshire where the Otter discharges itself into the British Channel.

To the scene of his childhood, Ralegh, in common with many men who have afterwards encountered the cares of a public career, retained an indelible attachment. It is pleasing to find him, at a subsequent period of his life, when ambition appears to have engrossed him, endeavouring, though without success, to possess the humble residence of his youth. The patrimonial estate was Fardel, in the parish of Cornwood, near Plymouth; and Smalridge, near Axminster, is said to have belonged to his ancestors, in the time of Henry the Eighth, but to have been sold, from the prodigality of its owners. *

The family of Ralegh, at the time of his birth, was greatly reduced in circumstances, and in the full experience of those privations which attend poverty, encumbered with rank. No title, except that of knighthood, had, indeed, as yet given false splendour to a name which boasted an ancient connection with Robert of Glouces-ter, a natural son of Henry the First; but the name of Ralegh had been one of some import-ance, and of great antiquity. Varying in its orthography from Rale, or Ralega, to Ralegh, Rawleigh, or Raleigh, this designation had been affixed to several villages and towns in Somersetshire,

* Oldys, p. 5.

Devonshire, and Essex; and his ancestors settled in Devonshire before the Norman conquest.* Allied by marriage to the earls of Devon, and related to various families of their own name in Somersetshire and Warwickshire, the ancestors of Ralegh had suffered a gradual decrease in their landed possessions; so that Fardel alone, of all their estates, remained as the inheritance of Walter Ralegh, the father of him who was destined again to raise his family to distinction. Some memorials of ancient grandeur were still, however, preserved from the devastations of time or misfortune; and Sir Walter received, as an heir-loom, a target, which had been suspended in a chapel at Smalridge consecrated to Saint Leonard, by one of his forefathers, in gratitude for deliverance from the Gauls†; and the records of this endowment are stated to have been afterwards presented to Sir Walter Ralegh by a priest of Axminster.‡ That the origin and early piety of this ancient race were little known in the days of Elizabeth, until the fame of their celebrated descendant called them forth from obscurity, is evident from the anecdote which Lord Bacon relates, in illustration of the popular error which assigned to Ralegh the term "Jack, or upstart." Queen Elizabeth was one day playing upon the virginals, whilst Lord

* Cayley, p. 2.

† Prince's Worthies of Devonshire, p. 530. ‡ Cayley.

Oxford and other admiring courtiers stood by: it happened that the ledge before the jacks had been taken away; upon observing which the two noblemen smiled, and, when questioned by the queen regarding the cause of their mirth, gave as the reason, "that they were amused to see that when jacks went up heads went down." * The queen, notwithstanding this sarcastic allusion, had not, however, in receiving Ralegh into her favour, departed from her usual rule of never admitting "a mechanic or new man into her confidence †;" and Ralegh had, afterwards, the credit, by his deeds, of directing the investigation of antiquaries to the details of his lineage. These, as points of curious enquiry, demand some attention; but are of subordinate interest in the history of one whose very poverty and obscurity became the origin of his fortunes, by being the stimulus to his industry.

That Ralegh naturally, and even commendably, prized the advantages of an honourable descent, may be inferred by the solicitude afterwards displayed by his relative Hooker to define, in his dedication to him of the Chronicles of Ireland, the claims to distinction which their common ancestry possessed; since Hooker enjoyed the patronage and friendship of his

* Bacon's Apophthegms, No. 182.

† Naunton's Fragmenta Regalia, 4to. p. 28.

kinsman, and sought in his writings to do him honour; but, there is no reason to suppose that he rested his hopes of greatness upon any basis less solid than that of his own merit and exertions. With the inconveniences of a reduced inheritance, the father of Sir Walter Ralegh experienced those attendant upon repeated marriages, and numerous offspring. By his first wife he had two sons, the elder of whom, George, became the possessor, after his death, of Fardell; which afterwards devolved, successively, to his two brothers, the younger of whom, Carew, sold his patrimonial property; and it passed for ever from the family of Ralegh. The mother of Ralegh, and the third wife of his father, was the daughter of Sir Philip Champernon of Modbury, and the widow of Otho Gilbert, a gentleman of large property, residing at Compton, in Devon. Three children, Carew, Walter, and Margaret Ralegh, were the result of this last union; after which the father of Sir Walter resided entirely at Hayes, where the younger branches of the family were reared.

It is singular that no trace is preserved, either in the letters, or by the conversation of Ralegh, of the mode and place of his earliest education. That species of biography which, by describing the progress of intellect, affords the most important assistance, and, oftentimes, encourage-

ment, to the young and aspiring, appears to have been little enjoyed or understood by our ancestors. It was thought much to preserve the name of the college, or even of the university only, where a celebrated individual received his last chance of tuition: and the history of his previous early years, in which the bias of the character is generally determined, has scarcely ever been transmitted to us, even by those who have been minute and faithful annalists of the events of mature life. Respecting the portion of instruction which fell to Ralegh's lot, it is merely known, that at sixteen he was sent to Oxford, and was entered as a commoner both at Oriel College and at Christ-Church, in compliance with a custom not unusual in former times, and, probably, intended to secure the privilege of aspiring to a fellowship at one or other of these colleges. * During a residence in the University of three years, he devoted himself with success to the study of philosophy and of letters; and, though he left Oxford without a degree, yet, he acquired a higher honour in obtaining the good opinion of Bacon, who there foretold his future eminence. †

In the choice of a profession Ralegh appears to have been divided, for some time, between the

* Fuller's Church History, lib. 4. and 5. fol. 104.

† Oldys, p. 5.

bar and the camp. That he actually entered at any of our inns of court is, however, doubtful; and the prevalent opinion, that he was at one time a student of the Middle Temple, arose either from his display of legal acuteness on his subsequent trial, or from a temporary residence within the walls of that establishment. Queen Elizabeth, with a view, perhaps, to the intellectual culture of her young courtiers, commended our inns of court, and was accustomed to say, "that they fitted young men for the future:" hence it is probable that, in those days of mental slavery, all who aspired to her favour were reported to have pursued the course which she approved; and that Ralegh was not unwilling, during her reign, to enjoy the credit of having been thus prepared for public life. He is, however, affirmed by one who knew him well, to have been trained, "not part, but "wholly gentleman, wholly soldier;" and there appears to have been but little time allowed for any other plans of study, since, from the statement of Hooker, he spent in France "good part of his youth in wars and martial services."* In the circumstances of his relations Ralegh found inducements to a military career: his maternal uncle, Henry Champernon, being an officer

* Ralegh's Ghost, 4to. p. 15.; and Hooker, Epist. Ded. See Oldys, 9.

of some note in our armies.* At the request of this kinsman, Ralegh enlisted into a troop of gentlemen volunteers under Champernon's command, who purposed leading them into France, in order to assist the Protestant princes engaged in the civil wars of that country. This adventurous band went forth on horseback, bearing on their colours the motto, "*Finem det mihi virtus.*" They were sanctioned by the permission of Elizabeth, who had shown her approbation of the cause by accommodating the Queen of Navarre with a sum of money, upon the deposit of certain jewels in the English treasury.† It is doubtful in what service, or with what success, the troop were distinguished in France; but it appears that they were well received by the Queen of Navarre and the Protestant princes, and that they remained six years in their employment.

It is conjectured that, unless on some casual leave of absence in England, Ralegh must have witnessed the massacre of Saint Bartholomew in 1572, and shared in the dangers of the unfortunate Hugonots. Perhaps, from his participation in the horrors of this scene, he imbibed that aversion to religious intolerance which afterwards characterized him as a senator, and which was then far less prevalent, even among philos-

* Wood, Athen. Oxoniensis, vol. i. col. 435.

† Camden, p. 117.

phical and intelligent men, than it has happily proved to be in the present day. Whatever may have been Raleigh's situation on this momentous occasion, no actual traces of its impression on his mind remain, however, in his writings, nor have been transmitted by his biographers; a circumstance which may seem to imply his absence from the massacre, since he has alluded to many of his services in his works. It is scarcely probable that allusions to such an exhibition of human vengeance in its most appalling form would have been omitted by one who, in his History of the World, has frequently drawn a parallel between the scenes which he narrates, and those with which he was identified by his own experience.

In that monument of his genius and industry, he refers to his presence at the battle of Moncontour, in Poitou, and extols Count Lodovic of Nassau, brother to the Prince of Orange, who made the retreat on that occasion, with such resolution and prudence that he saved one half of the Protestant army, then broken and disbanded: — "of which," says Ralegh, "myself was an eye-witness, and was one of them that had cause to thank him for it." * It is a fact equally certain, and much more important, that,

* Hist. of the World, book v. chapter ii. sect. 8. edit. Lond. 1687.

in these tumultuous scenes, Ralegh, then only in his eighteenth year, collected and stored up a portion of those facts and observations with which he afterwards enriched his History of the World; a work to which the soldier and the scholar, the courtier and the moralist, may repair both for instruction and delight.

In 1575 he returned to England for a few years, but soon resumed his military career, under Sir John Norris, in the Netherlands. Here he was, in all probability, engaged in the battle of Rimenant, in which Don John of Austria, then governor of the Netherlands for Philip the Second of Spain, was defeated; a disgrace which that commander only survived two months.

1578.

An enterprize of a new description now engaged the energetic mind of Ralegh. Various circumstances conspired to direct his attention to the progress of maritime discovery; a subject on which the imaginations of the ardent, and the speculations of the busy were then actively engaged. During the two last centuries, a spirit of daring adventure had been encouraged by the splendid examples of Vasco di Gama and of Columbus, and by the meritorious, though less fortunate, exertions of Magellan, who lost his life before his undertaking was completed. Spain and Portugal, mutually jealous to obtain the earliest knowledge of the shortest passage to the valuable possessions of

India, vied with one another in endeavouring to promote, throughout their respective dominions, a thirst for maritime glory. England had borne her part in the emulous contention for colonial superiority, and, in common with her continental rivals, had, latterly, turned her attention towards the north-east coast of America. In the reign of Henry the Seventh, the island of Newfoundland was discovered by a Venetian merchant, Sebastian Cabot, who took the command of an English squadron. To extend our knowledge of this territory, and to obtain a more secure and acknowledged possession of it than had, hitherto, been effected, became, in the reign of Elizabeth, the object of general solicitude.

It was the fortunate lot of Ralegh, not only to possess an enterprizing and resolute spirit, but to be connected with those who had the will and the power to encourage his rising genius. His relations on both sides were eminent; and his mother was, at a later period, authorized to make a boast, rare in those days, of being the parent of five knights. Of these, three were the sons of her former marriage, — Sir John, Sir Humphrey, and Sir Adrian Gilbert.* Sir John Gilbert was sheriff and Custos Rotulorum of the county of Devon, and was a kind of oracle in those parts, as well as a liberal country gentleman, and benefactor to the poor. Sir Adrian was scarcely less

* Note in Biographia Britannica, Life of Sir H. Gilbert.

estimable, and became more famous than his pacific brother, for a patent which he took out for the investigation of the north-west passage. With this patent, and under his auspices, the celebrated John Davis discovered the straits which bear his name. But the most admirable, although the most unfortunate, of the three brothers, was the distinguished mariner, Sir Humphrey Gilbert. * This good and brave man, although a second son, yet received from his father a very ample fortune; but it was from his mother's judicious care that he derived the still greater advantage of an excellent education, at Eton first, and afterwards at Oxford. Since this lady was, also, the mother of Ralegh, and had, by both her husbands, the credit of giving heroes to the world, it is not extravagant to conclude that she must herself have been a woman of merit, and that the energetic character of her children might, in a great measure, be attributed to her nurture and example.

Like Walter Ralegh, his half brother, Sir Humphrey, after quitting college, had some intention of studying at one of the inns of court, although his favourite pursuits had been cosmography and navigation †: but being introduced to Queen Elizabeth by his aunt, Mrs. Katherine Ashley, one of

* There was in the reign of Henry the Seventh a famous navigator of the same name, whose maps are still preserved in Whitehall.

† Biographia, note from Hooker's Dedication.

her majesty's waiting-women, he made so rapid a progress in her favour, as soon to be preferred to a very important command in Ireland. Here, like Ralegh, he passed some years in an arduous and bloody service, until he had attained his thirty-third year; when returning to England, he resolved to add to the glory of his name and country by some important and difficult enterprize, the spirit of which he doubtless imbibed from the examples of the other great navigators of the times.

Sir Humphrey was thirteen years older than Ralegh, and may be supposed to have possessed a very considerable influence over his mind. — Their characters were, indeed, in many points similar; their views and pursuits were the same: both were enthusiastic, aspiring, patriotic; and both were unfortunate. The device which the elder brother adopted early in his career might have been used, also, by his successor in the paths of fame: it represented Mars and Mercury joined by a cross, with this motto, — *Quid non?* alluding to the power which is acquired by a strong determination to unite pursuits the most dissimilar, and to conquer difficulties.

Successful in the field, and bold and impressive in the House of Commons, in which he sat as representative for Plymouth, Sir Humphrey, about the period when Ralegh had made his first essay in military operations, began to revolve

in his mind the practicability of making out a north-west voyage to the East Indies. The existence of such a passage was first discovered by him by means of his mathematical knowledge, and a scientific and perspicuous treatise written in support of his arguments*; but he was destined never to enjoy the honour of executing the project which he had conceived: it was, however, completed after his death, as we have seen, by his brother, Adrian Gilbert.

1578. Deferring for a time the commencement of this important scheme, Sir Humphrey obtained permission of the queen to plant and inhabit certain parts of North America, which were not occupied by any of her allies.† In this undertaking, which was professedly for the extension of the Christian faith, he was joined by Ralegh, from motives probably mingled, ambition, desire of gain, and ardour for distinction, being, perhaps, his first inducements.

For this and similar expeditions, not courage only, but capital was required. Elizabeth, at the beginning of her reign, possessed seventeen ships of war only, and the rest of the British navy, which effected afterwards such glorious achievements, was composed either of ships supplied by Bristol, Barnstaple, or other commercial towns, of vessels hired by the queen, or furnished by

* Hakluyt's Voy. iii. p. 11. † Birch.

the company of merchant adventurers, by the city of London, or even by private individuals.* The share which Ralegh had in the risk or profits of his first voyage to Newfoundland, was, probably, confined to his personal participation in its dangers; for, at this early period, he had little to venture in any enterprize. He joined his kinsman with several other gentlemen, but circumstances were adverse to their success. Many who had promised to assist them with men and ships failed in their engagements. They set out with two sail only; one of which, after various perils, was lost in an unfortunate engagement with the Spaniards; and Ralegh, after encountering dangers which would have disheartened a man of a less sanguine temperament, returned to England, not to relax into inaction, but to point his exertions towards other objects. He soon found employment for his active temperament in a school of military science, similar to that in which his brother-in-law had been already trained. The situation of England, with respect to neighbouring countries, afforded to her young, half-civilized, and warlike nobility a constant and yet varied school of military science, the favourite study as well of a barbarous as of a corrupt age. France, the Netherlands, and especially Ireland, gave continual occupation to her armies, and prevented the courtiers who thronged

* Campbell's British Admirals, vol. i. p. 441.

around the queen from becoming exclusively the indolent minions of her vanity. The Irishry, as they were vulgarly called, were with difficulty kept even in the semblance of subjection; and disturbances, succeeded by actual rebellion, were the incessant results of the attempts which Elizabeth made to introduce, by force, the reformed religion into the sister kingdom. Indeed, being, as Camden describes them, "an uncivill people, and the more prone to superstition," it required a far greater military force than the parsimonious expenditure of the queen allowed, to prevent the frequent recurrence of such broils during the whole of her reign. New troubles had now arisen; and a plot, commenced in 1570, at the instigation of Philip the Second, in order to place the natural son of Pope Gregory the Thirteenth on the throne of Ireland, was revived under a more threatening aspect. The invaders, composed partly of Spaniards, partly of Italians, landed under the command of an officer named San Joseph, at Smerwich, in Kerry, where they erected a fort, to which they gave the imposing designation, "Del Oro."* It was at this crisis that Ralegh obtained a commission, under Lord Grey of Wilton, then Lord Deputy of Ireland, a nobleman of considerable abilities, sullied, unhappily, by cruelty. The principal services in which Ralegh joined, were performed under the com-

* Rapin, vol. vii. p. 404. Gordon's Hist. Ireland, vol. i. p. 373.

mand of Thomas, earl of Ormond, Governor of Munster, whom he assisted in quelling the rebellion in that province. The conduct of the young soldier, although commended for valour, was yet disgraced by a degree of barbarity scarcely to be excused in earlier times than those in which he lived. Having surprised the rebels at Rakele, he observed one of the prisoners laden with withies. To the inquiry what he meant to have done with these, the undaunted reply was given, "To have hung up the English churls." Ralegh, unmoved by the hardihood of the unfortunate man, caused him to be instantly strangled with his own withies, and ordered his companions to be treated in a similar manner. * This conduct, which presents not the only charge of cruelty with which the memory of Ralegh has been taxed, appears, however, to have been approved by the Lord Deputy, who, like the other English commanders of the period, regarded the Irish rather as a race of wild and noxious animals that ought to be exterminated, than as human beings, subjects of the same monarch, children of one heavenly father, and creatures capable of being reclaimed from error and turbulence by mild and just, yet vigilant, measures. The disposition evinced by Ralegh towards this wretched people proves

* Birch's Life of Raleigh, from Hooker's Supplement of the Chronicle of Ireland, in Holinshed, fol. 167.

how frequently scenes of bloodshed obliterate, for a time, virtuous dispositions and the convictions of philosophical reasoning. Ralegh was, indeed, brought by adversity and reflection to see the folly, the guilt, and the shame of those pursuits, however skilfully conducted, which encroach upon the happiness of our fellow-men. Stripping away the false colours in which the prejudices of education and the ardour of youth had once arrayed the mighty conquerors of the earth, Ralegh has left his testimony to the great truth, that we shall one day cast off our false notions of glory, separated from virtue, as pernicious and grovelling delusions. "And as certainly," says he, "as fame hath often been dangerous to the living, so is it to the dead of no use at all, because separate from knowledge: which were it otherwise, and the extreme ill bargain of buying this lasting discourse understood by them which are dissolved, they themselves would then rather have wished to have stolen out of the world without noise, than to be put in mind that they have purchased the report of their actions in the world by rapine, oppression, and cruelty, — by giving in spoil the innocent and labouring soul to the idle and indolent, and by having emptied the cities of the world of their ancient inhabitants and filled them again with so many and so variable sorts

of sorrows." * Such were the sentiments of Ralegh, when in confinement, old age, and sorrow, he awoke to the feelings of nature, and yielded to the dictates of reason.

Meanwhile, the season of his youth was occupied in furthering those designs which, in his later days, he justly execrated and contemned. His zeal in the queen's service was rewarded by an appointment to command in the siege of Del Oro. By this post the Spanish vessels were enabled readily to bring supplies to the insurgents, and it was consequently of the utmost importance. It soon fell before the assaults of the English, who, under the command of Admiral Winter, invaded it by sea, and, by land, under that of Lord Grey, while Ralegh fought with great valour in the trenches. Such was the barbarous policy of the Lord Deputy that, although the garrison surrendered, yet the greater part were slaughtered; and to Ralegh, and to another officer who first entered within the castle, the execution of the iniquitous task was entrusted.

Nov. 9. 1578.

Unwearied with this terrible service, Ralegh remained at Cork during the winter, and occupied this season of repose from military toils, in watching the most conspicuous individuals amongst the rebels, and in harassing those whose

* Hist of the World. Conclusion.

wealth rendered them desirable prizes to the English government. Cruel, indeed, were the dissensions of that period, when the fear of Ralegh's unrelenting and destructive hand impelled the Lord Barry, to burn his castle of Barrymore rather than leave it in the possession of his bloodthirsty and rapacious enemies. Among the perilous services in which Raleigh was engaged, the seizure of Lord Roche, a powerful insurgent nobleman, may be considered as a remarkable instance of his valour and address. To dispel the formidable confederacy in which Roche was engaged, he offered to bring him, with his family, before the Earl of Ormond, at Cork. This design appeared impracticable, from the numerous partisans of the rebel chieftain, scouring the country in bands, or infesting it in ambuscades. But Ralegh stole a night march, with great secrecy and alacrity; and partly by manœuvre, partly by force, effected an entrance into the very halls of the enemy. Here he was tempted, by the proffered hospitality of the Irish nobleman, to waive the purpose of his visit. He partook, indeed, of an entertainment, but when it was concluded, avowed his resolution to oblige his host to return with him as a prisoner. Lord Roche, finding resistance useless, consented to accompany him, declaring that he would prove himself innocent of the charges brought against him. He found, however, that the young

Englishman was resolved on carrying him to Cork by night, notwithstanding the natural perils of the road, and those which were prepared for them by the vigilant and active Irish rebels. Regardless of these sources of danger, Ralegh and his prisoners went forth, sheltered by the obscurity of the night from the attacks of the rebels, but exposed to fatal accidents from the rocks and hills, which in a country scarcely civilized, presented incessant obstacles to a safe journey. Many of his soldiers were severely hurt, and one of them killed by repeated falls; but Ralegh forgot his troubles when he presented to the Lord Ormond, on the following day, his important prizes. The most satisfactory result of the affair was, that Lord Roche was honorably acquitted, and that he afterwards conducted himself as a faithful subject. *

On the departure of Lord Ormond for England, Ralegh was entrusted with the government of Munster, in conjunction with two other officers. † In this situation he continued until the spring of the year 1582, when, upon the subjugation of the principal rebels, he returned to England; desirous, probably, to walk in the sunshine of that court, the splendour of which,

* Oldys, 48.

† Spenser's View of the State of Ireland

independent of any substantial advantages, attracted an ardent and ambitious mind.

Ralegh was now in his thirtieth year. Few persons have entered public life with advantages of mind and person equal to those which he possessed. Few sovereigns have known better how to prize both mental and external attributes than the vain but discerning Elizabeth. The features of Sir Walter Ralegh are said to have been moulded with the utmost symmetry, and the outline of manly beauty to have pervaded the whole countenance. He had a noble and capacious forehead, an eye beaming with intelligence, softened with the shadows of profound thought. Such at least is the impression conveyed by the most favourable portraits of this gifted man: these differ, however, greatly, and one may almost imagine to trace the changes that mark the gradations from youthful ardour to the cares of maturity, from the cares of his maturity to the sorrows, perplexities, and infirmities of his old age. The person of Ralegh was admirably proportioned, and dignified, his height being nearly six feet.* Thus he united every attribute of grace with strength, and doubtless with expression: for it is impossible that such a mind as his should not have imparted a power of fascination, of which even an ordinary countenance is susceptible when illu-

* Oldys, 145.

minated with genius, and consequently with sensibility. These natural advantages were important circumstances in the eyes of Elizabeth, who frequently selected her objects of regard from trivial motives, but retained them in her favour only as she found their talents justify her choice. To the attractions of a noble figure, Ralegh studied to combine those of a graceful and splendid attire. Many of his garments were adorned with jewels, according to the richest fashions of the day, and his armour was so costly and curious, that it was preserved, for its rarity, in the Tower. In one of his portraits he is represented in this armour, which was of silver richly ornamented, and his sword and belt studded with diamonds, rubies, and pearls. In another, he chose to be depicted in a white satin pinked vest, surrounded with a brown doublet, flowered, and embroidered with pearls; and on his head, a little black feather, with a large ruby and pearl drop to confine the loop in place of a button. * These, it may be said, were no extraordinary proofs of costly expenditure in dress, in days when it was the boast of Villiers Duke of Buckingham, to be "yoked and manacled" in ropes of pearl, and to carry on his cloak and suit alone, diamonds to the value of eighty thousand

* Oldys, 145. Note in Ibid. from a MS. in Harleian. B.H. 90. c. 7. fol. 672.

pounds : but the duke was rather a courtier, than a statesman, and was little else; whilst Ralegh as a man of science, of letters, and of martial reputation, might have been supposed worthy of deriving reputation from higher sources without the necessity of descending to the trivial competitions of dress. It is not to be supposed that any of the fair sex could be insensible to this trait of character in the accomplished Ralegh; and abundant proofs have shown, that the wise and wary Elizabeth prized these adventitious attributes as highly as the weakest and vainest of her attendants. She received therefore, with complacency and surprise, the adroit flattery of Ralegh, who, meeting the queen near a marshy spot, threw off the magnificent mantle which he wore, and cast it on the ground. This anecdote, which is generally related of their first meeting, if not true, is at least characteristic. He soon received encouragement even from the pen of the queen. He is related to have written upon a window, which she could not fail to pass, this line: "Fain would I climb, but yet fear I to fall;" which received from the hand of Elizabeth this reply, "If thy heart fail thee, climb not at all." * To her masculine shrewdness, the queen united some sentiments of romance which would have ac-

* Fuller's Worthies of Devon.

corded with a gentler nature. She commended poetry, especially when addressed to herself, although she allowed the illustrious Spenser to languish in poverty. Ralegh, like many men of genius, in youth expended the exuberance of a powerful mind in verses which add but little honour to his great name, except as they show the versatility of his talents, and the enthusiasm of his sentiments. Early in life, he wrote commendatory stanzas to Gascoigne's "*Steel Glass,*" dated from the Temple: the "*Silent Lover,*" and the "*Excuse*" followed at intervals; but the only masterly poem "*The Farewell,*" and most of his admirable prose works, were not composed till the beginning of the seventeenth century.

But though the graces and accomplishments of Ralegh might amuse the fancy of Elizabeth, they could not win her confidence, which was never thoughtlessly nor indiscriminately bestowed. She soon became sensible of the acuteness of his understanding, in the progress of a dispute which was argued between him and Lord Grey, in presence of the council. The grounds of this quarrel have not transpired, and have been variously represented; but the merits of Ralegh's cause may be implied, from his gaining a decision in his favour against the veteran soldier and statesman.

This circumstance made a great impression

upon the public, who probably expected a different result: but merit, at courts, without patronage, resembles a fine plant in an ungenial soil. Yet were there some generous spirits who prized Ralegh's attainments, and sought to make others prize them also; such was Sir Philip Sidney, the first English commoner that ever received the offer of a foreign crown. But that he was calculated to ascend the throne of Poland was scarcely more honourable to him, than the distinction accorded unanimously by his contemporaries, as the pattern of English gentlemen; the soldier perfected into a hero by Christian principles, which men in those times, and indeed in latter days, have strangely thought incompatible with warlike pursuits.

More favoured by the circumstances of his birth than Ralegh, so far as advancement at court was concerned, Sidney had received an education somewhat similar to that of his friend, had passed through the same scenes, and had participated in the same interests. There was, however, a wide discrepancy between their fortunes, and the apparent chance which each possessed of being numbered among the fortunate and great of their nation. The father of Sidney, the early companion of Edward VI., and successively the trusted servant of Queen Mary and of Elizabeth, had means of promoting the elevation of his son, of which the remote situ-

ation, and reduced estate of Ralegh's father, prohibited the expectation. Brought up from his cradle to anticipate the patronage of sovereigns, and receiving his very Christian name from Philip of Spain, young Sidney was sent, after college, to perfect his education by intercourse with foreign nations; but with difficulty escaped the horrors of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, by taking refuge in the house of Sir Francis Walsingham, then our ambassador at the Court of Charles IX. It is not improbable, that during this eventful visit to France, his intimacy with Ralegh was formed, a tie which was never relinquished until annihilated by the early death of Sidney.

Entering thus into life with such unequal prospects of success, these highly-gifted youths were, however, endowed severally with a proportion of intellectual power, which made the balance even. Much may be allowed for the necessity for arduous exertion, which in the one case might reasonably be supposed to have stimulated a mind capable naturally of strong efforts. But the talents of Sir Philip Sidney were rather elegant than powerful, and the character of his mind that of generous enthusiasm rather than of determined perseverance. He was formed, indeed, more for the ornament and the idol than for the benefit of society, and was more the hero of romance than the benefactor of his

country. Nurtured, also, in the bosom of prosperity, and having his fortunes created by his father, Sidney had not the patience to brook those irritations, nor the art to conceal those natural emotions which are generally suppressed at courts. His romance of the Arcadia was composed, as it is well known, in a season of retirement, occasioned by an affront given to his jealous notions of honour. That very composition, unduly extolled in his own time and too greatly depreciated in ours, bespeaks a mind more replete with poetical associations than strong in original genius, or polished by sedulous culture.

Endowed, however, with enough of Ralegh's spirit and attainments to prize and to comprehend him; and displaying an exemption from the meaner passions, and a degree of disinterestedness which rendered him, in a moral point of view, far superior to his friend; Sidney possessed means and opportunities of assisting his young associate in his progress to fame; and he is supposed to have generously availed himself of them by introducing him to the Earl of Leicester, uncle, on the maternal side, to Sidney. * The personal credit of Sidney was at this time great with Elizabeth, but his influence through Leicester was still more considerable. Never were there characters so dissimilar, as those of the uncle

* Sir Henry Sidney married Mary, eldest daughter of John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland.

and nephew, who were united, not only by ties of consanguinity, but by an affectionate confidence on the part of Sidney, whose spirited work in defence of his relative against the libel entitled Leicester's Commonwealth, was both an acceptable tribute to the earl, and a proof of Sidney's devotion to that nobleman.

The empire of Leicester at court was, at this time, generally considered as indisputable. The object rather of Elizabeth's passionate admiration than of her affection, Leicester had long held an imperious sway over the private regards of that princess. Her attachment to him has been a subject of wonder to contemporaries and to posterity. His merits as a statesman and commander were doubtful, his crimes were more than suspected. * Unhappily for his country, his

* His guilt, with regard to the death of Amy Robsart, his wife, was so generally believed, that an universal sensation of horror attended the preaching of her funeral sermon at Oxford, by one of Leicester's chaplains, who, instead of saying as he intended, "*this lady so pitifully killed,*" *slipped* out the word "murdered," a mistake which confirmed the general opinion, that her falling down the stairs of Cumnor Hall "without hurting of her hood," was not accidental. — See Osborne's *Trad. Memoirs of Queen Elizabeth*, vol. 188. note.

This lady, Amy Robsart, was the daughter of Sir John Robsart, and was a great heiress. Her death happened in 1560, at a period when he was thought likely to aspire to the favour of two queens, Mary of Scots and Elizabeth. By the inquest held upon her body, John Walpole, Esq., ancestor to

brilliant career had obliterated the impression which his dark deeds had made upon the public mind, and had silenced the imputations of cowardice sometimes cast upon him. Yet, in the language of one who personally knew him, Lei-

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the earl of Walpole, was found to be the rightful heir to her estate. Those who are curious to know more of her mysterious history should consult Aubrey's Antiquities of Berkshire, vol. i. p. 149. from which Osborne has probably borrowed the foregoing anecdote.

This unfortunate lady was not, perhaps, the most to be pitied of Leicester's victims. Sir Walter Scott has blended into his admirable, but heart-rending, novel of Kenilworth her story with that of Douglas Howard, Lady Sheffield, whose first husband died suddenly of a severe cold, called by the scandalous "Leicester's rheum." This lady bore Leicester a son and a daughter, but he sedulously kept their supposed marriage a secret, allowing her, at the same time, to be served as a countess in her chamber, and subscribing himself her "loving husband." After this, when he publicly married the countess dowager of Essex (whose husband it was reported he had also poisoned), these two ladies were stiled Lord Leicester's two "testaments," Lady Sheffield being the old, and Lady Essex the new. His first wife still asserting her claims, he had an interview with her in an arbour in Greenwich Gardens, where, in the presence of witnesses, he offered her 700*l.* a year to desist from her attacks; but she still persisting, he carried his vengeance upon her so far, she was obliged for protection to accept the hand of Sir Edward Stafford; offering as an excuse for this virtual renunciation of her claims, that she had had potions given her which took away her hair and nails. (*Biographia*, art. Dudley.) With all this, Leicester assumed the character of a saint, "I never," says Naunton, "saw letters more seeming religious than his."

cester was esteemed to be "more of Mercury than of Mars *;" and while the partiality of Elizabeth induced her to entrust him with commissions of the greatest importance, he never had the confidence of the people. † It is doubtful whether he also possessed the respect of Elizabeth in so great a degree as her conduct towards him seemed to imply. Her infatuation for him was devoid of that delicate and confiding attachment which alone can give stability to such ties. This was apparent after his death, when, with an avidity natural to her coarse mind, she seized upon a portion of his goods, which were offered to public sale, in order to repay herself for some debt due to her from the deceased nobleman. ‡ While to the world she appeared wholly devoted to Leicester, it is probable that the earl, who knew the female character well, may have been conscious of the insecurity of his station in her regard, and of the hollowness of that affection which followed him not to the tomb. This secret perception rendered him peculiarly sensible to the dread of rivalship. When Raleigh first appeared at court, the gleams of royal favonr were

* Naunton's Regalia, p. 14.

† The diplomatic corps ought to be much indebted to him, as having been the first to assume, when ambassador in the Low Countries, the high-sounding title of "Excellency." — *Biographia, note.*

‡ Note in Hume, 8vo edit. vol. v. p. 317.

sometimes supposed to fall abundantly upon the avowed enemy of Leicester, Hunsdon, earl of Sussex, a stout English peer, whose influence over Elizabeth showed how often the same character may be acted upon by qualities totally opposite: for Sussex was honest, and therefore fearless, proud of his relationship to the queen, and of his descent from a long line of illustrious Fitzwalters; and on that account more acceptable to the people than Leicester, whose lineage recalled the recollection of the Dudley, the detested agent of Henry the Seventh. Too unguarded for a courtier, and too unbending for a favourite, Sussex felt all his life the ascendancy of Leicester, and on his death-bed, bade his friends beware of "the Gipsy;" a name which he had given to the earl, and then esteemed to be one of peculiar opprobium *: so equally poised, indeed, was the apparent influence which Leicester and Sussex were supposed to possess at court, that the introduction of Ralegh to the especial notice of the queen has been attributed to both these noblemen. It was not, however, long, before Leicester began to dread his advances, and determined to oppose his career by the introduction of a new rival. This was Robert Devereux, earl of Essex, a man far inferior to Ralegh in natural abilities, and in cultivation

* Naunton, p. 15.

of mind; but gifted with dispositions far too generous and noble for the part which he had to perform in life. Various circumstances conspired to establish Essex as the idol of the people, and of his Sovereign; and Ralegh found it, perhaps, difficult to forgive the success which frustrated his own rise to greatness. Yet, whilst the prosperity of Ralegh was less dazzling, it was more secure than that of the unfortunate Essex. Sincere and well-intentioned, yet vain, presumptuous and self-willed, the faults of Essex operated chiefly to his own injury, and even his virtues appeared to add to the dangers by which he was surrounded. His popularity was greater than that of any British nobleman of his time, and was the source of much ill-will towards him, on the part of many of his equals; Ralegh, on the other hand, either avoided public applause, as dangerous, or disregarded it as unimportant. "Seek not to be Essex, shun to be Ralegh," was the wise counsel of the elder Lord Burleigh to his son; thus designating those persons as representing the two extremes of popularity and of public aversion. Yet Essex and Ralegh both died upon a scaffold: so difficult is it to steer clear of the quicksands on which despotism hurries its victims.

In 1583, Ralegh was employed by Queen Elizabeth to attend Simier, the agent of the Duke of Anjou, in his addresses to Elizabeth, on his return to France; and afterwards to at-

tend the Duke to Antwerp. * The Queen accompanied her foreign suitor as far as Canterbury, and commanded certain of her nobility to continue their attendance upon the Duke, until they reached the Netherlands. † It has been asserted, in the famous work entitled Leicester's Commonwealth, that the Earl, to revenge himself on Simier for the discovery of his marriage to Queen Elizabeth, employed pirates to sink the Frenchman and his companions at sea, but that they were prevented by some English vessels. If this assertion were true, Ralegh must have shared in the perils thus prepared for Simier. ‡

Dissatisfied, probably with the routine of a courtier's life, and aware that his real credit was best to be promoted by exertion, Ralegh soon evinced impatience to be again in action; and resolved to make a second voyage to Newfoundland, in conjunction with Sir Humphrey Gilbert, in which his personal services should be employed. With this intention, he built a ship of two hundred tons; named it the Bark Ralegh; equipped it for the voyage, in which he purposed acting as vice-admiral; Sir Humphrey being the general of the expedition. This respected commander, was, in fact, the very soul of the undertaking, which, by his credit alone, received contributions of ships, men, and money, from new adventurers in the voyage to

* Cayley, i. p. 43. † Camden's Eliz. 242. ‡ Camd. year 1582.

Newfoundland. Encouraged by the assistance of his friends, Sir Humphrey was assured also of the Queen's regard, by her presenting him, as a token of her approbation, with a small anchor of beaten gold, with a large pearl at the peak, an ornament which he wore ever afterwards at his breast. In the patent which Her Majesty had granted to him for the discovery of foreign parts, a clause was inserted, by which it was rendered void if, at the end of six years, no new possession were gained. * It was therefore of importance, that no unnecessary delay should impede the departure of Sir Humphrey and his associates for those remote regions, which they fondly hoped to add to the British colonies.

The fleet assembled, upon this occasion, consisted of five sail, and the united officers and crews, amounted to two hundred and sixty men. Among these were artificers of every kind, besides miners and gold refiners; nor were they, according to the account of Captain Hayes, of all the commanders the only one who returned from Newfoundland to relate the sad disasters of this fatal voyage, destitute of "Musike in good variety: not omitting the least toyes, as Morris dancers, hobby-horse, and day-like conceits, to delight the savage people, whom we intended to winne by all fair means possible." †

The Bark Ralegh, which was the largest

* Biog. art. Gilbert. † Hakluyt, iii. 149.

vessel of the expedition, set sail from Plymouth on the 11th of June, 1583, but had not
1583. been many days at sea, before it was discovered that a contagious fever had seized the whole crew; and Ralegh, with its captain and crew, were obliged to return to harbour. Providence appears, however, in this event, to have afforded peculiar protection to the ship, and to its commander. Ralegh had indeed the mortification of leaving Sir Humphrey Gilbert to finish the enterprize without him. That gallant officer reached Newfoundland, of which, by the usual form of digging up a turf, and receiving it with a hazel wand, he took possession, in right of the discovery made by Cabot: planted the first British colony there, discovered a silver mine, divided some portion of the lands among his followers, and began his voyage home, in the joyful expectation of further encouragement from Queen Elizabeth.* But this brave man was destined never to return to his native country. The ship in which he had stored the silver ore, which he designed to show as a specimen, was lost; and, before he had passed the Azores, tempestuous weather and terrible seas sank the spirits of the sailors, who, in the true spirit of the superstitious fears to which they are prone, reported that they had heard strange voices in the

* Hakluyt's Voyages, folio 159; also Camden, Eliz. 402.

night, scaring them from the helm. Even the principal officers were alarmed for the safety of Sir Humphrey, who had imprudently chosen to sail in the Squirrel, a small frigate. In vain did his friends intreat him to change his vessel, and to come on board the Hinde, the largest ship of the squadron. The honour of the dauntless Sir Gilbert had, unhappily, been touched by the imputation of cowardice, a report false, as it was cruel. He persisted therefore in remaining at his post, saying, "I will not desert my little company, with whom I have passed so many storms and perils;" nor would he remain on board the Hinde, except for a short time, for the purpose of a convivial meeting with the officers, their last interview; and they parted, agreeing that all the captains should give orders to hang out lights at night. Meanwhile the dangers thickened; the oldest mariners declared that they had never witnessed such seas; the winds changing incessantly, the waves, in the simple language of a spectator, "breaking high, and pyramid-wise." The hearts of the most courageous were appalled by a meteor, common in storms, which the seamen consider to be an apparition of fatal import, and which they call "Castor and Pollux." Once, the anxious company of the Hinde beheld the frigate nearly cast away; then again it approached them, and they saw Sir Humphrey sitting on the main-mast, with a book in his hand, exclaiming, as he

regarded his companions in distress, "We are as near heaven by water as by land." Suddenly the lights were extinguished; those who kept watch cried aloud that all was over, and, in the morning, the frigate was beheld no more. * Thus died one, who was a loss, not only to the active service of his country, but to the interests of nautical science. His principal work, "A Discourse to prove the Existence of a Passage by the north-west, to Cathaia and the East Indies," is written, according to the opinion of competent judges, with accuracy, perspicuity, and arrangement. In another treatise, he suggested the invention of a spherical instrument, for the better knowledge of the longitude, and amended the the usual errors of *Sea-cards.* † But he has been erroneously confounded with his name-sake, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who, in the reign of Henry the Seventh, made several voyages of discovery, projected the passage of Cathaia, and made many valuable maps and charts, which were long preserved in Whitehall. ‡

The pursuits, acquirements, and principles of action of Sir Humphrey, may be presumed to have been imitated by his young relative, Ralegh, who improved upon his schemes, and in many respects seems to have imbibed his senti-

* See Mr. Edward Hayes' narrative, Hakluyt, vol. iii. 143 to 159.

† Note in Biographia. ‡ Note in Oldys, p. 22.

ments. It was not only the precept of Sir Humphrey, but his rule of conduct, "That he is not worthy to live at all, who, for fear or danger of death, shunneth his country's service, or his own honour; for death is inevitable, and fame immortal." In consonance with this noble maxim, but exercising it perhaps too rigidly, he perished.

The details of the voyage were brought home by the captain of the Hinde, which reached England in safety; but Ralegh, though grieved at the loss of his friend and associate, lost no time in forming schemes for a fresh undertaking; and, in consequence of a representation which he laid before the Queen and council, he obtained letters patent, empowering him to "discover such remote, heathen, and barbarous lands as were not actually possessed by any Christian, nor inhabited by any Christian people." So indistinct were the notions which even the most cultivated minds, in this country, at that time, entertained of geography, that, in this and in some other patents of that period, there was neither mention of any particular part of the globe, nor of any latitude or longitude fixed for the plantation proposed. *

That the entire merit of this project is due to Ralegh, is a matter of considerable doubt. In

* Anderson's History of Commerce, vol. ii. p. 158.

conjunction with Sir Humphrey Gilbert, he has the merit of being the first English adventurer that took out men as settlers to foreign regions; but it has been supposed, with some appearance of probability, that Sir Humphrey's first expedition was directed to that particular territory which received the name of Virginia. For, in the house of Ralegh Gilbert, the son of the unfortunate general, was a picture conjectured to have been intended for Sir Humphrey, holding in one hand a general's staff, and resting the other upon a globe, with the word Virginia inscribed on it, whilst the noted golden anchor is seen suspended from his dress.* It has been also surmised, that the name of Virginia was applied to that country some years previous to the enterprize for which Ralegh obtained letters patent. It is evident that the plan had been a considerable time in agitation, from the promptitude with which Ralegh began it; a degree of despatch which, it would have been scarcely possible to have adopted, in a novel and undigested scheme.

It is said that the favourite studies of Ralegh's youth, were the discoveries of Columbus, and the histories of the conquests of Pizarro, Fernando Cortes, and of other Spanish adventurers in the reign of Charles V.† With this peculiar

* See note, Oldys, answered in Biographia, art. Gilbert.

† Oldys, 22.

direction of his ideas and hopes, it might almost have been expected, that he would have sought a personal participation in those exertions which his enthusiastic temper might consider as certain to lead to glory. But the recent death of his relation, and the variety of his civil occupations, together with his present want of experience in navigation, account for his entrusting his arduous speculations in other hands.

The project was eminently successful. Ralegh had ascertained from pilots and other seamen who had sailed in Spanish vessels to Mexico, that, on returning, as they usually did, by the Havannah and the Gulf of Florida, a continued coast on the north-west had been observed: and, adding to this information the fact, that the Spaniards had hitherto settled only on the middle and southern parts of America, he formed the natural conclusion that there were yet vast tracts to the north undiscovered. We all know that his conjecture was true to a much greater extent than he probably conceived.

The risk on this scheme was entirely his own: he fitted out two vessels, and entrusting them to the charge of able commanders, despatched them by the Canaries and West Indies, then the usual route to North America. The two captains, after a passage of more than two months, reached the Gulf of Florida; and, landing on the island of Wokoken, took formal possession

in the name of their Queen: and making acquaintance with the natives of that region, brought two of them back to England. On their return, they imparted so favourable a report of the climate and soil, that Elizabeth was induced to listen to the plan of settling a colony there; and Ralegh was commanded to name the new acquisition Virginia, in honour of his sovereign. This appellation was since given to all the coasts of North America upon which the English afterwards colonized. The part discovered by Ralegh is now called Carolina. *

By various successive voyages under Adrian Gilbert and Sir Richard Grenville, the fame of Ralegh's discovery of Virginia was kept alive in the public mind; and, at length, a colony of a hundred and seven persons, among whom was Herriot the mathematician, was established at Roanok, in Virginia. Shortly afterwards, Ralegh, having joined the celebrated Davis and other public-spirited persons, in an association for the discovery of the north-west passage to China, he had the good fortune to be concerned in the investigation of Davis' Straits; and Mount Ralegh, near that important channel, was named as a tribute of respect to him. †

Ralegh was now in the zenith of his pros-

* Stevenson's Historical Sketch of the Progress of Discovery, p. 356.

† Birch, vol. i. 14.

perity. His first expedition to Virginia was rewarded by knighthood, a distinction which Elizabeth prized so highly, that when importuned to raise one of her courtiers from a knight to a baron, she declared that she "thought him "above it already." * Rich prizes, and important captures were carried home in triumph by his privateers; and had Ralegh's chief desire been wealth, it might have been abundantly gratified. To crown his felicity, he had the gratification of seeing his honours bloom around him in his native soil, whence he had passed into the busy world, to create his own fortunes. He was chosen in 1584, to represent the county of Devon in parliament; and subsequently appointed seneschal of the duchies of Cornwall and Devon, and Lord Warden of
1586. the Stannaries. The Queen, also, granted him the privilege of licensing the vending of wines throughout the kingdom, a very lucrative office, which it was not thought incompatible with the highest rank to exercise. And as riches and honours are apt to take wings and fly away, the Queen gave him a less perishable present in a portion of the lands forfeited in Cork and Waterford, during the rebellion recently suppressed in Munster. This estate,

* Osborn's Traditional Memoirs of Queen Elizabeth, vol. i. p. 84.

extending over twelve thousand acres, was planted by Ralegh; but not being fitted for his own residence, was sold to Richard Boyle, afterwards Earl of Cork. Thus Ralegh, like most of Elizabeth's favourites, was rewarded without the slightest encroachment either upon the exchequer or the queen's privy purse. It is highly to his credit that he subsequently freely bestowed upon his country what he had diligently gained in her service.

Ralegh had, during this period of his life, intervals of repose, in which he proved that no patronage was necessary to raise him to fame. Among the most prominent qualities of his mind was application; by this he was enabled to improve the limited portion of time which he could allot to general studies, so as to become one of the most elegant and powerful writers, one of the most philosophical and diligent historians of his country. To reading, Ralegh assigned four hours only; to sleep, five; allowing the remainder of his day to business; reserving, however, two hours for relaxation and discourse, being aware how salutary, if not essential to the mind, is that recreation which refreshes without enervating the intellectual system. In this systematic arrangement, he found time to cultivate the fine arts. In music he was a proficient; and to painting he showed his

partiality by a liberal patronage.* In oratory Ralegh also excelled; so that neither the originality of his ideas, nor the depth of his knowledge, were concealed by a tame or imperfect mode of conveying them to others. To extend to all, the advantages which he himself enjoyed, was a favourite scheme of this great man; and with a view to promote the circulation of knowledge, he set up an office of address, to which the industrious and curious might apply for information of every species. Of this institution little has transpired, except a passage from the pen of the celebrated Evelyn. In a letter to the Earl of Clarendon he remarks upon "that long-dried fountain of communication, which Montaigne first proposed, Sir Walter Raleigh put in practice, and Mr. Hartlib endeavoured to revive." The plan suggested by Montaigne was, to have an office of inquiry in every town, in which persons might register the kinds of information which they wished to possess, and their terms for obtaining it.

Consistent with such labours as these was the laudable determination evinced by Ralegh to encourage and exalt those persons of merit whose station or circumstances precluded their rising, unassisted, to distinction. He supported Morgues, an eminent French painter, during his

* Oldys's Life of Ralegh, p. 48.

residence in England for the purpose of making maps and drawings of Florida. He was the friend and coadjutor of Richard Hakluyt. In this industrious compiler Ralegh, indeed, found one of those indefatigable enthusiasts who, like the astonishing Leland, seem born to perpetuate the labours, and to transmit to posterity the fame, of others. It is a well-known fact, that he once rode two hundred miles to gain from an eye-witness the particulars of an unfortunate expedition to Newfoundland, in the time of Henry the Eighth; an account of which he has published in his collection of voyages. It was the incessant endeavour of Hakluyt, not only to preserve the histories of recent voyages, but to rescue our naval antiquities from the dilapidations of time: nor could the prospect of rising in the clerical profession, of which he was a member, induce him to desert his favourite topic for those more closely connected with his spiritual vocation. He spared neither labour nor expense in pursuit of that knowledge which he desired to withdraw from oblivion; rescued from destruction, and transcribed many ancient manuscripts of patents, privileges, and letters; consulted many libraries, and culled information from every source, both oral and written, which he could possibly discover.

In these erudite investigations Ralegh, in many instances, became a liberal and effective assistant.

He lent his aid to Hakluyt, to enable him to publish his collection of English voyages. Hakluyt, in gratitude, dedicated to Ralegh several of those works, the important value of which consists in their being compiled from letters and other authentic sources, not to mention the constant communication which their collector maintained with mariners in all quarters. From the last unfortunate voyage to Newfoundland, Hakluyt, who had some intention of joining it, was, like Ralegh, providentially preserved. In order to give his sanction, and a greater degree of credit, to the collection of English voyages, Ralegh appointed Hakluyt one of the corporation of counsellors, to whom, in 1588, he assigned his patent for the prosecution of the North American discoveries.* These mutual services were of great benefit to the progress of maritime investigations, and redounded to the honour of both. The adventurers in perilous enterprize knew that their daring exploits might be raised into importance, and rescued from obscurity, by the efforts of so faithful and learned a preserver of their transactions as Hakluyt; and thus the desire for discovery received a fresh stimulus. Hakluyt was rewarded in the manner which he best loved, and had a river and a promontory in Greenland named after him, which are still called by his name. Hakluyt was in good circum-

* Biog. art. Hakluyt.

stances, and required rather the countenance and assistance of Ralegh than pecuniary aid. In Thomas Herriot, a man of obscure birth and humble fortunes, Ralegh found, however, an object to whom his bounty was important. Herriot was the centre of a little circle of mathematicians, ingenious, but at that time speculative men, whose pursuits had, at no very remote period, been not unfrequently confounded with necromancy.* To persons of scientific pursuits, the protection of some liberal patron was, therefore, in those days, peculiarly advantageous. Ralegh received Herriot into his house, paid him a yearly pension, and was instructed by him in the science which he professed, and which, at that time, was not considered as the essential basis of a liberal education, but which was probably, in a great measure, the foundation of Ralegh's acquirements and science. At a subsequent period, Ralegh promoted the interests of his tutor, by introducing him to Henry Earl of Northumberland, who, from his love for mathematics, acquired the name of Henry the Wizard†; and when that accomplished nobleman was confined in the tower for life, upon suspicion of being concerned in the gunpowder treason, Herriot shared his imprisonment, in company with two other mathematicians, Warner and Hues. These

* See Monteil des Français des divers Etats, tome premier, p. 17.

† Fuller's Worthies.—Collins's Peerage, ii. p. 433.

men had a table at the Earl's charge, and were called his Magi.* Herriot was the inventor of the way of notation, since universally used in algebra, and of many improvements in that science, the honour of which was for many years attributed to Des Cartes. Ralegh availed himself of his learning and assiduity, in employing him to settle the colony at Virginia, whither he sent him in 1584, under Sir Richard Greenville, with instructions to draw up and publish a topography of the country, which was published in 1588.† It has been supposed that Herriot implanted in the minds of both his patrons principles of deism; and the cruel disorder, a cancer of the lip, of which he died was imputed, by the churchmen of the day, to a judgment of Providence. It is not difficult to defend both Ralegh and his master from this charge. Herriot is said to have doubted the authenticity of the Mosaic account of the creation, and to have rejected many parts of the Old Testament. From this incredulity, which has, even in more enlightened days, been unhappily observed in learned and pious men, he was inferred to be a Deist‡: yet he diligently endeavoured to instil the doctrines of Christianity into the minds of the natives of Virginia; and it is far more common for those who pro-

* Wood, vol. i. p. 459.

† Biographia.

‡ Wood's Athen., fol. p. 459.

fess religious faith to swerve from their tenets in practice, than it is for those who broach sentiments of infidelity to perform actions worthy of Christian motives. We cannot be far wrong, if we allow to those who seek to promote the cause of religion, some personal knowledge of her benignant influence.

With regard to Ralegh, innumerable passages in his works; his advice to his son, his splendid conclusion to his History of the World, and many other parts of that production, show a mind chastened and elevated by devotional feelings. It must, however, be granted, that these were the sentiments of his declining age, and it is possible that, in youth, his mind may have been less settled in points of faith. The slightest acknowledgment of a doubt, or even the shadow of an innovation upon the pale of orthodoxy, was, in those days, sufficient to affix a mark of reproach which it was difficult to remove. "Ralegh was the first," remarks a writer of the age, "that ventured to "tack about, and to sail aloof from the beaten "track of the schools; and who, upon the dis- "covery of so apparent an error as the torrid "zone, intended to proceed in an inquisition "after more solid truths; till the mediation of "some, whose hardihood in hammering shrines "for this superannuated study, possessed Queen "Elizabeth that such doctrine was against God, "or her father's honour, whose faith (if he owned

" any) was grounded upon school divinity: where-
" upon she chid him, who was (by his own con-
" fession) afterwards branded by the title of an
" Atheist, though a known assertor of God and
" Providence."*

* Osborn's Miscellany of Sunday Essays, 12mo. vol. i. p. 722.

CHAP. II.

FAVOUR OF RALEGH COMMENTED UPON BY TARLETON. — FURTHER UNDERTAKINGS OF RALEGH. — VIRGINIA. — TOBACCO. — THE SPANISH INVASION. — LORD HOWARD OF EFFINGHAM. — RALEGH'S SHARE IN REPELLING THE ARMADA. — HIS VISIT TO IRELAND. — SPENSER. — RALEGH'S UNPOPULARITY WITH THE CLERGY. — DR. GODWIN. — UDALL. — THE BROWNISTS. — THE JESUITS. — FATHER PARSONS. — RALEGH'S MARRIAGE. — HIS DISGRACE AT COURT. — HIS VOYAGE TO GUIANA. — SERVICES IN THE ATLANTIC WITH ESSEX.

1586. THE favour which Ralegh at this time enjoyed at Court soon became the subject of general remark, and was even noticed upon the stage, in such plain and offensive terms, that Tarleton, the most popular actor of the day, when playing before the Queen, pointed towards Ralegh and said, "See how the knave commands the Queen!" Elizabeth reproved him with a frown, and banished him the royal presence, thus sacrificing her amusement to her indignation: yet, the audacious player had the assurance to add, that "Ralegh was of too much, and too intolerable a power;" a remark which might, perhaps, have been pardoned, had he not persisted in his observations,

and extended them to the Earl of Leicester, his riches and greatness.* No flattering invitations to the indolence of a courtier's life could, however, deter Ralegh from prosecuting those important schemes which he constantly cherished; and, considering the circumstances of the times, his ambitious and energetic disposition cannot be a cause of wonder.

The reign of Elizabeth was not only marked by achievements of the most adventurous and heroic character, but by enterprizes which required long and patient endurance of hardships, and a frequent surrender of private interests to the accomplishment of a great design. Preceded in the period of his undertakings by Hawkins and by Drake, Ralegh had every inducement in the examples of these men, both from the love of gain, and the desire of honour, to pursue the course they had followed. The efforts of Sir John Hawkins, which were, unhappily, directed to establish the detestable slave trade, had been rewarded by the acquisition of immense wealth; he and his brother possessing, in conjunction, thirty ships of the line†; yet he was, eventually, unfortunate, and died, soon afterwards, of a broken heart, in consequence of the failure of an enterprize in which he had hoped

* Cayley, 1. note 86.; from Bohun's Character of Queen Elizabeth.

† Campbell's British Admirals.

to ransom his son, a prisoner. Drake was still in the full enjoyment of a reputation, which, while the brave might envy, the virtuous must approve. It was his principle of action, in the expeditions which he conducted, and which were frequently carried on at the expense of individuals, to regard the service of his country first; next the advantage of his proprietors; and *lastly*, his own interests. His benevolence was commendable, and led him to assist Hawkins in the institution of the Chest, at Chatham; a sort of saving bank in which sailors might deposit their earnings, to form a fund for the sick and wounded.

Incited by the fame of these great men, Ralegh devoted a considerable portion of his fortunes to the increase and maintenance of his colony in Virginia, and sent repeated expeditions to that country, under the command of Sir Richard Greenville. But the schemes which he endeavoured to promote required more ample funds than he possessed, and a far more liberal patroness than Elizabeth. He found it advisable, however, in 1584, to reinforce the colony by the addition of a governor, and of a hundred and fifteen persons, with instructions to build a fort in the Bay of Chesapeak. The new settlers found that their predecessors had been, for the most part, murdered by the natives; yet, notwithstanding this discouraging state of affairs, they contrived to re-establish a friendly footing, and resolved to replant

themselves upon the vacant territory. They considered it essential, for this purpose, to despatch one of their party to England for a fresh supply of the necessaries of life; and the office was undertaken by their governor, who returned with the ships towards the latter end of the same year in which he had set out for Virginia.

Never was there a more unfortunate juncture, for the formation of a colony, than that in which the governor of Virginia found the affairs of England on his arrival. Elizabeth was, now, engaged in hostilities against Spain; and so much risk was hazarded upon the issue of the contest, that, in the words of the King of Sweden, she seemed "to have taken the diadem from "her head, and to have adventured it upon the "doubtful chance of war."* All lesser considerations were, therefore, disregarded; and Virginia, the first settlement of Great Britain in the New World, was suffered to languish without protection. Ralegh had prepared several ships to sail from Biddeford, in Devon, under the command of the brave and experienced Sir Richard Greenville; but they were retained by order of the Queen, and the governor was allowed to sail with several small vessels only, with which he was attacked by some French ships, and obliged to return to England. It is

* Hume's Reign of Elizabeth.

not surprising that, after spending upon this colony forty thousand pounds, and sending to its relief four fleets, furnished at his own expense, unassisted by the Queen, whose glory was also concerned in the undertaking, Ralegh should have assigned his right and title in the settlement to certain merchants and gentlemen of London; reserving to himself the fifth part of the gold and silver ore found in the territory, contributing a hundred pounds towards the expenses under its new owners, and promising, on all occasions, the further assistance of advice.* But Virginia, after all the sums bestowed upon her, and the valiant lives lost in her behalf, was almost wholly abandoned during the remainder of Elizabeth's reign.† One familiar custom recalls the formation of this colony to hourly recollection. It is well known that when Drake, on his return from the conquest of St. Domingo and other West Indian islands, visited Virginia, he brought home Lane, then governor of the infant colony; and in Lane's ship Tobacco was first conveyed to England. The prevalent usage of this allurement to indolence soon came into vogue; it was, probably, already familiar by report to the English, the Spaniards having discovered the plant in Yucatan so early as 1520, and the peculiar use of it for smoking being

* Oldys, p. 49.

† Anderson's Hist. of Commerce, vol. ii. p. 165.

common all over America, at the time of the conquest of that country. In the beginning of the sixteenth century, it was introduced into Portugal from Florida, by Hernandez de Toledo: from Portugal the seeds were sent into France, to Catharine de Medicis, by Jean Nicot, an agent of Francis the Second; on which account it received its generic name, Nicotiana, the specific appellation being derived from Tabac, the name of an instrument used in America for smoking it.* It was first grown in England in 1570, and its cultivation was continued in Yorkshire until prohibited by statutes: it was used both for snuff and for smoking. Even the ladies, who were then so deficient in refinement, that they cannot at least be reproached with the practice as an inconsistency, indulged in the pleasures of tobacco, being a very proper accompaniment to the general coarseness of their habits. In France, it was patronized by the great and the gay, under the name of the "Queen's Herb;" and in England it was allowed even in the royal presence. Queen Elizabeth was one day so rash as to enter into a wager with the subtle Ralegh, against the possibility of his ascertaining the weight of the smoke exuding

* In Yucatan, it was called *Petun* or *Pete-ma.* Humboldt found two species only in South America, the N. *laxensis* and N. *Andicola,* which grow on the Andes, that resemble the N. *tabacum.* Note in Dr. A. T Thomson's London Dispensatory, 5th edit. p. 445.

from any given quantity of tobacco. Her Majesty regarding the impracticability of the perfumed vapour being confined within a scale, was confident of her point; and surmised that Ralegh took a traveller's privilege in affirming to the contrary. Ralegh, however, outwitted her by weighing the ashes, and Elizabeth was obliged to confess that the difference between them and the original weight of tobacco settled the disputed point: upon which she consoled herself with a witticism, telling Sir Walter "that "she had heard of those who turned their gold "into smoke, but had never before seen the "man who could turn smoke into gold."* In process of time, the use of tobacco was considered likely to debase the manners of the people, and to render them barbarous, as "those "barbarians from whom its uses were derived."† Elizabeth discouraged its unlimited excess; and her pompous successor showed his usual mixture of sense and folly by his determined and outrageous enmity to it; and although it was not deemed expedient, from political motives, to abolish so great a source of revenue to the crown, he satisfied his prejudices and his conceit, by his famous work, entitled the "*Counterblast* "*to Tobacco;*" but succeeded by his power, rather than his wit, in diminishing its produc-

* Oldys, p. 32.

† Anglorum corpora in barbarorum naturam degenerasse, quum iidem ac barbari delectentur. Camden, 449

tion, notwithstanding his description of it, as "loathesome to the eye, hatefull to the sight, harmefull to the orgaine, dangerous to the lungs, and in the blacke stinking fume thereof, nearest resembling the horrible Stygian smoake of the pit that is bottomless."* Such, however, is the attachment of all classes of men to any favourite habit, that, notwithstanding an enactment of James the First, that no Virginian planter should cultivate severally more than a hundred pounds of it, and in the face even of papal edicts, tobacco, prized alike by the noble and the peasant, has maintained its popularity, although with some variations of fashion.†

1589. The assiduous attention which Ralegh, during the course of his life, at intervals, devoted to the colonies, was forcibly arrested at home by the pressing occurrences of this year. Already had an ostentatious account of the Spanish armada been published at Lisbon; and every circumstance attending this memorable invasion contributed to excite the emulation and the exertions of the martial portion of the English community. All persons of reflection extolled the fortitude of the Queen upon the approach of dangers so unusual, and her wisdom in preparing for the nation its surest means of defence, in the establish-

* See his Counterblast to Tobacco; and also a Warrant to Lord Treasurer Dorset for laying a heavy imposition on it. Oldys.

† See Appendix, B.

ment of the navy. Elizabeth had selected from the political conduct of her father one of the worthiest points of imitation, when she declared it to be her intention to preserve the security of the narrow seas; enquired into the causes of the decay in maritime force; issued orders for the preservation of timber; enjoined the casting of several pieces of ordnance; and in this country the manufacturing of gunpowder; which had hitherto been supplied from the Continent. Resolved to afford inducement and importance to the nautical profession, she deviated from her usual parsimony, in ordering the wages of seamen and officers to be raised; she attracted, by rewards and pensions, foreign artisans; and acquired, by these laudable means, the praise of effecting the restoration of naval power, and of rendering herself sovereign of the narrow seas. Yet Elizabeth, twenty years before the Spanish invasion, had but fourteen thousand seamen in her service, and was possessed of twenty-four ships of war only; and to her public-spirited and opulent subjects was she indebted for many of the vessels with which she now prepared to face the enemy.* Amongst others, Ralegh was liberal of assistance: whilst, through all parts of the country, such preparations were made to muster and discipline land forces†, and so noble

* Campbell's Brit. Adm., vol. i. p. 424.

† See Queen Elizabeth's Letter to the Marquess of Winchester and the Earl of Sussex, in Ellis's Letters, 2d series, iii. 137.

a spirit was manifested, that some persons even doubted the necessity of a fleet, and maintained that no invaders could make successful inroads into a country thus protected. But Ralegh refutes this opinion, in his History of the World, and proves how much exposed to diversions of the repelling forces would the invaded English have been, unless girded round with naval defence.* Meanwhile, as a member of the council of war instituted for the occasion, he drew up a well-digested scheme for the security of the nation; and, in his office of lord-lieutenant for Cornwall, he showed his zeal in assembling a militia.†

The death of the Marquis Santa Croce, who was destined to the command of the armada, and the subsequent appointment of the Duke of Medina Sidonia, revived the courage of the English, who justly confided in the abilities and valour of their own High Admiral, Lord Howard of Effingham. This brave and successful commander, a Roman Catholic, fighting against those of his own persuasion in behalf of a Protestant Queen, was the son, grandson, and nephew of distinguished naval heroes; his father, Lord William Howard, having held the same post with himself, and his uncles, Lord Edmund and Lord Edward Howard, having signalized their names in the reign of Henry the Eighth. Open, sin-

* Oldys, p. 47. † Ibid.

cere, and liberal, he presented a noble contrast to the Earl of Leicester, to oppose whose overweening power he had, it is thought, been elevated; and few of Elizabeth's appointments had been more acceptable to the people than that of Lord Howard to the eminent and perilous station which he now held. This general good opinion he fully justified. When apprized that the Spanish fleet was about to sail, he sailed also, and continued cruising for some time. The English government were meantime informed by a spy, whom they had placed in Madrid, that in May the Spanish fleet was ready, and only waiting for a fair wind to sail; such being the order and secrecy of the expedition, that the "lyghtnynge and thunderclapp" were intended to arrive bothe in a moment." * An incident at this critical moment shows how fatally Elizabeth's measures might have operated, had it not been for the disinterested and determined character of Howard. The ministry, thinking that there was no chance of any attack from the Spaniards this year, wrote by Walsingham, to tell him that the ships might return into harbour, to save the expense of retaining them at sea. To

* See Ellis's Letters, vol. iii. p. 134. In the letter from which this quotation is made, a curious passage occurs relating to a mysterious child, supposed to be the son of the Earl of Leicester and Queen Elizabeth, and said to have been born at Hampton Court.

this intimation he replied, "that he thought "differently; and that if his reasons were deemed "insufficient, the ships might continue at his own "charge." Elizabeth afterwards paid an ample tribute to his merits, when she said that "he was "born to save and to serve his country."

Lord Howard continued at his arduous station until he received intelligence that the Spanish fleet was approaching, when, in order to get out of Plymouth with such ships as he could muster, he not only gave orders in person, but worked with his own hands. He sailed the first night with six ships only; but when, at length, the invincible Armada advanced slowlyup the channel, the noble spirits who had remained calmly, yet anxiously, within their respective counties, the flower of all the young, and brave, and loyal gentlemen of England, as if by one glorious impulse, joined as volunteers the brave Howard, with their accumulated aid of men and vessels. The movements of the Spanish fleet were, by a fortunate accident, descried by a Scottish pirate, by whom the news of their progress was brought to Effingham. The dauntless Admiral Drake was playing at bowls upon the Hoe at Plymouth when he heard that the Spanish fleet was approaching, but he coolly declared his resolution to see the game out before he prepared for combat. Ralegh, the Cecils, the Earls of Oxford, Northumberland, and Cumberland, Sir Charles Blount, and others were

soon on the Downs with their several contributions to the British fleet. Ralegh, with some noblemen on board his vessel, sailed full of ardour and impatience to overtake the squadron, which he succeeded in reaching near Portland; and he annoyed the enemy with ships tacking about in a manner which it was impracticable for the heavy Spanish vessels to imitate. This rencontre was said by Sir Henry Wotton to have resembled a "morrice-dance upon the water." Thus, whilst the Armada advanced slowly up the channel towards Calais, the English fleet followed and infested it in the rear, until the enemy cast anchor near Calais, in expectation of being joined and assisted by the Duke of Parma. This opportunity was, immediately, seized by the British admiral for the execution of a stratagem suggested by the queen. He caused eight of his weakest and smallest ships to be filled with combustibles, and sent in the dead of the night among the Spaniards, under the guidance of two seamen. The Spaniards, mistaking them for the same species of fire-ship that had lately done much damage in the Schelde, took to flight with great confusion. Some of the Spanish vessels were dispersed into the wide ocean; others collected near Gravelines, where they were played upon by ordnance from Drake and Femreo, who were soon joined by Lord Howard, and other of the principal commanders. The Spanish admiral now determined

upon returning home; but to avoid contrary winds, and the risk of again facing the English, he took his course round the island, chased with unabating vigour by the English. It was now that Lord Howard felt the insufficiency of the ammunition with which the vessels had been supplied. From this circumstance, the opportunity which might otherwise have been seized, of capturing the whole Spanish fleet, was lost. Yet the ill-fated armada escaped not; but driven by storms to the western coasts of Scotland and to Ireland, half of its boasted squadron was wrecked, and the surviving crews returned to their native shores only to add terror of the English name to the disappointment and mortification already experienced in Spain. * The particular share which Ralegh had in the action off Gravelines has not been stated. His general services in the defeat of the armada are collected from various parts of his own works, and from the observations of Von Meteren, in his work upon the Low Countries. From a passage in his History of the World †, it is evident that he had made very close and able observations upon the measures of that memorable day, and that he highly approved, from excellent reasons, the plan pursued by the Lord High Admiral in the choice and

* Camden, 370. Hume, reign Elizabeth.

† Hist. of the World, b. 5. chap. 1. sect. 6.

management of his vessels.* That he participated in the perils of this battle is, therefore, evident; it would have been impossible for his valiant spirit to have remained inactive in a war justified on the part of England by the most imperious necessity. By the happy issue of this threatening danger to his country, Ralegh was again at liberty to engage in some new adventure; and few of his undertakings were commenced without some wise and patriotic end in view. His sword was now unsheathed in assisting Don Antonio, king of Portugal, against the usurpations of the king of Spain; and, to this cause, in which Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Norris were joined, Elizabeth lent her aid both in ships and money. Ralegh probably attended at his own expense, and he reaped the fruit of his exertions by the capture of some Spanish vessels laden with stores and ammunition, intended as supplies for a fresh invasion of England. Historians have, however, been silent on the subject of his services on this occasion; but in conformity with his custom of referring to most of his military expeditions in his works, he has treated of this affair, minutely, in his History of the World. †

1589.

* And in a work which he afterwards published and dedicated to Prince Henry, entitled, Observations on the Sea Service, he remarks upon the proportion of ordnance allowed in the sea battle in 1588. See Birch's edition of Ralegh's works.

† Fol. b. 5. c. 1. sect. 9.

In returning from Portugal, Ralegh visited Ireland; attracted thither partly by a desire of viewing his possessions in Munster, but chiefly for the purpose of seeing Edmund Spenser, the celebrated author of the Faery Queen. With this great but unfortunate poet Ralegh had become acquainted, during his former services in Ireland, when Spenser had attended Lord Grey of Wilton, then Lord Deputy, as his secretary. Descended, like Ralegh, from an ancient and honourable family, and allied to many of the English nobility from his relationship to the Spensers of Northamptonshire, but born of indigent parents, Edmund Spenser had been far surpassed by Ralegh in the progress to worldly attainments and honours. Whilst Ralegh was cherished and flattered at court, Spenser was deprived of the benefits of royal favour by Lord Burleigh, who, when Elizabeth ordered the poet to receive a hundred pounds, enquired on what account, and being informed that it was as an encouragement to poetical genius, remonstrated with his sovereign mistress for her prodigality in thus rewarding "a song." "Give him, then, what is reason," said Elizabeth, and the poet went for some time unrewarded.* It was not, however, long before

* Until he addressed this well-known remonstrance to the queen: —

"I was promised on a time
To have reason for my rhime;

Spenser proved the soundness of his understanding by completing his View of the State of Ireland, in which, under the name of Irenæus, he vindicates his patron, Lord Grey, from the arguments of Eudoxus. This production, which he intended to have been followed by a work on the antiquities of Ireland, was not published until 1633, when the writer was no longer alive to enjoy the fame which it deservedly received. He was, however, consoled for this delay, and for the death of his first patron, Sir Philip Sidney, by the gift of three thousand acres of land in Cork, once belonging to the Earl of Desmond, and forfeited by his rebellion to the crown. Here he lived in the castle of Kilcolman, formerly the abode of the Desmonds, seated upon a fine lake, and commanding a view which presented the varied beauties of mountain and forest scenery, through which the river Mulla wandered. * In this romantic residence Spenser composed that great poem, which, if it delights and fills the imagination, commands also from the judgment the tribute of dispassionate approbation. Restrained by the necessity of offering incense to the power and vanity of Elizabeth, the unfortu-

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From that time until this season
I received nor rhime nor reason."

Upon receiving these lines, the queen, it is said, ordered the payment of the hundred pounds first promised.

* See Smith's Hist. of Cork, vol. i. p. 55—333. also vol. ii. p. 260—264.

nate Spenser has shown that even in the most sequestered retreats worldly desires intrude. But the queen, although constituting the heroine of the piece, and represented, according to a modern writer, as "sending forth the moral virtues illustrated under the character of different knights," * proved, that she merited not the praise, by her neglect of the author. Ralegh, on arriving at the retired dwelling of Spenser, found him poor, and almost in obscurity. Already had he tasted of the poet's true portion in the miseries of rejected love; but Rosalinde, or Rosa Lynde, the supposed idol of the bard, had, it may be presumed, been forgotten in the happiness of a subsequent marriage. Ralegh, although more fortunate than his friend, had also experienced vicissitude; for the source of that displeasure which Elizabeth shortly afterwards evinced towards him, had probably already become obvious to his own mind. The mood in which he visited Spenser was evidently of a melancholy character. Spenser, in his pastoral entitled "Colin Clout 's come home again," describes in Ralegh the shepherd of the ocean, a hopeless mourner for the lost favour "of Cynthia, the lady of the sea," otherwise the queen.

"His song was all of lamentable lay,
"Of great unkindness, and of usage hard."

* Lord Lyttleton.

The imagination would fain linger upon the probable conversation of these two great men, so congenial in feelings, so devoted to the same mistress, Fame; alike so favoured, yet so unfortunate in pursuing her tracks. Poetry, the luxury of minds undebased by worldly ambition, occupied a great portion of the meditations in which these gifted friends indulged; Spenser was persuaded by Ralegh to repair to the English court, in order to present to the queen three books of his poem; and Ralegh was probably at this time preparing the verses, which he afterwards wrote on the "*Faery Queen.*"* They travelled together to England, and passing the Isle of Lundy, landed in Cornwall, at Saint Michael's Mount, and proceeded to London. Here Ralegh, in vain, endeavoured to procure for his friend those substantial advantages, which might enable him to pursue his literary career unshackled by the anxieties of penury. Spenser, although possessed of eminent talents as a politician, and of extensive information in Irish affairs, failed in his efforts to perform the task imposed on him, of laying down a plan for subduing and reforming that country in two years. In dejection and neglect he returned to Ireland, which he left some years afterwards, in order to publish his poem. During his absence from Kilcolman, his property

* Biog. Britannica, art. Spenser.

was plundered by the rebels under Lord Tyrone, and his house, containing one of his children, was burned to the ground. This calamity broke his heart. Reduced to a state of extreme misery and dependence, he yet retained somewhat of that delicacy of feeling, which is, or ought to be, inherent in poets; and when, in declining health, he received twenty pieces of gold from the Earl of Essex, he returned them, saying "he had no time to spend."

Upon his remains, as so often happens to men of genius, were lavished the honours which had been withheld from himself. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, according to his own wish, near Chaucer; and his obsequies were attended by poets and other distinguished men of his time, whilst complimentary verses were thrown into his grave. That Ralegh cheered the last sorrowful days of his friend by his bounty is not specified, nor is he known to have shared in the fruitless homage offered to his memory. His envied rival, Essex, provided the funeral of the poet; and the accomplished Countess of Dorset erected his monument.

During some time after Ralegh's return to England, he appears to have enjoyed the peculiar favour of the queen. For his services against the Armada, she rewarded him with an augmentation of his office of licences; and, for the assistance which he had afforded to Don Antonio, he

was repaid by the gift of a gold chain from Elizabeth.

In the exercise of his licence for vending wines, he was not restricted in increasing the number of vintners in any part of the kingdom. Hence a dispute arose between him and the university of Cambridge; the heads of which espoused the cause of a vintner whom they had formerly appointed, not only in opposition to a man named Keymere, licensed by Ralegh, but to his personal hindrance and danger in the occupations of his business. Such, indeed, were the oppressions in which that learned body occasionally indulged, that notwithstanding repeated and temperate remonstrances, they finally imprisoned the man for following a calling which had been lawfully permitted to him. The intelligence of this proceeding having reached Ralegh, he was resolved to use more determined measures than those which he had hitherto adopted; and, addressing the Vice-Chancellor and Masters of Colleges, he wrote to them in these words:—"As I reverence the place of which you are the governors, so will I not willingly take any disgrace or wrong from you;" subscribing himself "their friend, as they shall give cause." This epistle produced an humble and explanatory reply from the Vice-Chancellor, representing that they had enjoyed the disputed privilege for more

than two hundred years; that they had not neglected any quiet means to procure his permission for their continuance of the office: but that he had used such severe language, that they had entertained but little hopes of conciliating one who must have understood how to receive and to return the language of courtesy: "being by birth a gentleman, by education trained up to the knowledge of good letters; instructed with the liberal disposition of an university, the fountain and nursery of all humanity; and further, by God's good blessing, advanced in court, from which the very name of courtesy is drawn." To this flattering language Ralegh was, probably, not insensible; for, in the course of a few months, the altercation was terminated through the mediation of the Lord Treasurer Burleigh, who was at that time Chancellor of Cambridge. *

Encouraged by the testimonies of approbation which he had received from the Queen, and availing himself of a temporary cessation of hostilities with Spain, Ralegh now prepared to execute a design, which he had formed for abolishing the power of that nation in the West Indies. With this intention, he collected, chiefly at his own ex-
1590. pense, thirteen vessels, with which he determined to raise a certain and permanent

* Oldys, 27.

renown. Aided by two of the Queen's men-of-war, and authorized to assume the title of General of the Fleet, he set sail from the west of England. Scarcely had he commenced his voyage, before he was overtaken by Sir Martin Frobisher, with orders from the Queen, who wisely dreaded the absence of one of her bravest defenders, whilst danger still threatened the country. But Ralegh, conceiving that his honour was pledged to proceed, pursued his course, although almost hopeless of engaging with the Spanish fleet, having received intimation that it would not sail that year. Discouraged still further by a storm off Cape Finisterre, and finding his provisions run short, he divided his fleet between Frobisher and Sir John Burgh, with orders, which were diligently obeyed, that one party should terrify the Spaniards on their own coast, whilst the other should remain at the Azores, to intercept the Caracques on their voyage from the West Indies. This arrangement produced the capture of the Madre de Dios, the largest prize that had ever been brought to the English shores. The Queen, who had contributed so scantily to the expenses of this adventure, engrossed, nevertheless, a considerable share of its profits, which were estimated at five hundred thousand pounds. The jewels and the valuables fell chiefly to the lot of the sailors, so that Hawkins, who had joined Ralegh

in the speculation, gained, as well as his associate, a diminished portion of the prize.

This was the only occasion, if we except the service against the Spanish Armada, in which Ralegh co-operated with Sir Martin Frobisher. That brave, and indefatigable man, the associate of Drake, in the successful expedition to the West Indies, died four years after his joint service with Ralegh, in consequence of a wound received at the siege of Brest; the injury was not of a dangerous character, but an ignorant or careless surgeon, after extracting a ball which had entered, omitted to clear out the wadding. Thus perished one of the most meritorious, although not one of the most amiable, of our naval heroes. During a period of fifteen years, Frobisher had, in the early part of his career,* cherished the project, which he afterwards attempted, of finding a north-west passage to China. For the supplies of ships and money, he vainly solicited several English merchants, a class of men, who are unjustly described by the indignant Hakluyt, as never regarding virtue "without sure, certain, and present gains."† Happily for Frobisher, Elizabeth listened to his schemes, thus securing to herself the fame of being the first sovereign by whom the project of a north-west passage to China was publicly and perseveringly encouraged.

* Birch, 34. † Hakluyt, vol. 3. p. 28.

It is a relief to find Ralegh for several years after this enterprize devoting himself to the civil interests of his country; and shining in the council and the senate, with a calmer and more benignant lustre than that which attended his warlike exploits, As a politician, his leading principles of action seem to have been, religious toleration, determined opposition to amity with Spain, and hatred of her encroachments. For the display of these opinions, he incurred odium, persecution, and death. It is probable that in the turmoil of worldly business, and in a court, where it is difficult to "hold fast one's integrity," he may, in some instances, have forgotten the great ends which he appeared especially qualified to pursue; and mingled with elevated designs motives of envy and ambition. But on a general retrospect of his character, he appears to have been a public-spirited and loyal subject to Queen Elizabeth; and yet an enlightened and liberal defender of the rights and interests of his country. To the established church, Ralegh was frequently adverse; and, from his conduct in various instances, obnoxious. His first offence was an encroachment upon their temporalities. In his anxiety to obtain a certain manor, he is asserted to have traduced to the queen, Godwin, Bishop of Bath and Wells, an aged prelate, the father of Dr. Francis Godwin, who wrote the "*Catalogue of English Bishops.*"

But although not entirely free from blame in this affair, Ralegh escaped the censures of Dr. Francis Godwin, who, in revising his work in the succeeding reign, makes no comments upon the conduct of Sir Walter, but rather regrets that his father should have sought to monopolise livings, to the duties of which his infirmities precluded him from attending.*

The accusation against Ralegh, which was thus, in some degree, nullified, was adduced by Sir John Harrington in his work entitled a Brief View of the Church of England, which was intended to serve as a continuation of Godwin's Catalogue of Bishops. It was written during the reign of James the First, in the time of Ralegh's subsequent confinement; and was addressed to Henry Prince of Wales, rather as a story told in his Highness's presence and hearing, than as a grave narration of established facts. Yet Harrington relates the circumstance as an anecdote generally known; and annexes to it several particulars which are extremely discreditable to Ralegh. It is observable, however, that he alludes to him not by name, but only as a chief favourite of that time, who, being unable to get the manor of Banwell from the bishop, took advantage of an unsuitable and unseasonable marriage made by the aged

* Oldys, p. 59.

prelate, to incense the queen's mind against him. Persecuted and alarmed, Dr. Godwin was, eventually, constrained to surrender, for the term of a hundred years, another manor belonging to him, in order to save that which Ralegh coveted. The relater of this tale affirms, that he had himself carried many angry messages on the subject from the queen to the bishop, which were in one instance, delivered to him through the Earl of Leicester; that favourite at first espousing the cause of the old man, but eventually concurring with Ralegh, "like Pilate and Herod to condemn Christ." * Such is the story, and such are the irregular, yet not contemptible, grounds upon which it rests. This charge was not the only one which the able and discerning but time-serving Harrington has brought against Ralegh in his works, although rendering him justice in his familiar letters.

The protection which Ralegh afforded to Udall was another cause of offence to the clergy. Udall, although regularly educated as a minister of the established church, had yet joined the Nonconformists; and had distinguished himself both for his zeal and eloquence, but still more for his "*Demonstration of Discipline;*" a work reflecting upon the church, but construed by the harsh yet fawning spirit of the age, into a libel on the Queen's majesty. Upon this ground he

* Harrington's Brief View, 110, 111.

was indicted, was brought to the bar in fetters, and there tried upon the depositions of witnesses, no *vivâ voce* testimony being allowed: neither was he permitted to reply, the defence which he might have prepared, being rejected unheard, as libellous. The unhappy man was found guilty of publishing the book, but remained half a year in prison, without receiving his sentence: when, continuing firm in his tenets, he was brought before the Lord Keeper Puckering, to receive judgment of death. Immediately after the sentence, a reprieve was sent him from the queen, at the instance of Ralegh, who advised him to improve this interval of mercy by addressing a letter to Elizabeth, explaining the true purport of his writings. Some hopes of liberty were thus afforded to Udall, but his release was deferred from time to time, until he died in prison, having rejected the *humane* offer of a free passage to Guinea, upon condition that he should re-visit England no more. It was in reference to the mediation of Ralegh on this and other occasions, that Elizabeth said to him, "When, Sir Walter, will you cease to be a beggar?" "When your gracious Majesty ceases to be a benefactor," was the adroit and courteous reply.

1592. Consistent with his horror of persecution were the efforts which Ralegh made in parliament, to prevent the expulsion of the

Brownists, and other sectarians, from this country, upon the score of religious opinions. The Brownists owed their origin and name to one Robert Brown, who afterwards carried his heretical tenets to Zealand, the hot-bed of extravagant and speculative modes of faith. Although in orders, and afterwards preferred to the rectory of Northampton, yet Brown held that the "church-government was antichristian; her sacraments clogged with superstition; that the Liturgy had a mixture of popery and paganism in it, and that the mission of the clergy was no better than that of Baal's priests in the Old Testament." * For the unhesitating display of these opinions, which, unwarranted as they were, had been best answered by that spirit of forbearance which "suffers long," Brown incurred unwonted persecution, which placed a violent and mischievous sectarian almost on the footing of a martyr; he could boast that he had been confined in thirty-two prisons, in many of which he could not see his hand at noon-day; and, although, upon his promise of conforming to the established church, he was permitted to enjoy one of its benefices, yet he died in Northampton gaol, whither he was sent for striking a constable. His opinions, which were derived from those of the Donatists, occasioned for a time, violent controversies, and

* Biographia.

his followers gave considerable annoyance to the church, so late as the reign of Charles the First. At length, after being associated in public proclamations with Anabaptists and Atheists, the Brownists, furious and obnoxious as they were, were softened into Congregationalists, or Independents, holding a middle course between Presbyterianism and Brownism. *

It was in reference partly to these schismatics that an act was passed for the purpose of "retaining her Majesty's servants in due obedience," specifying further, that any person above sixteen years of age who refused, during the space of a month, to attend public worship, should be committed to prison; and, if persisting for three months in such determination, be banished the realm, under pain of death, if detected in returning. † To the enactment of this law, very little opposition was made by the compliant commons then met; but Ralegh opposed it upon reasons, which have ever been deemed the most conclusive in favour of religious toleration: these, he grounded upon the injustice of punishment, when the offence consists in those thoughts and cherished notions, which are hidden within the inmost recesses of the heart, and of which our fellow-men cannot, on that account, be competent judges. Such were the sentiments which

* See note in explanation of their tenets. Biog. art. Brown.

† Hume, reign Elizabeth, year 1591.

he expressed upon this occasion: — "In my con-
" ceit, the Brownists are worthy to be rooted out
" of a commonwealth; but what danger may
" grow to ourselves if this law pass, were fit to
" be considered. For it is to be feared that
" men not guilty will be included in it; and that
" law is hard, that taketh life, and sendeth into
" banishment; where men's intentions shall be
" judged by a jury *, and they shall be judges
" what another means. But that law, which is
" against a fact, is but just; and punish the fact
" as severely as you will. If two or three thou-
" sand Brownists meet at the sea, at whose
" charge shall they be transported, and where
" shall they be sent? I am sorry for it, but I
" am afraid there are near twenty thousand of
" them in England, and when they are gone,
" who shall maintain their wives and children?" †
Such humane and judicious suggestions as these appear to have had their due weight with the House. A committee was appointed to revise the bill, and among the list, Ralegh's name appears: many amendments and additions were consequently adopted. ‡

* Recusants were to be tried by civil judges at assizes, in preference to ecclesiastical courts. (Strype's Annals, vol. iv. p. 264.) An enactment which Hume attributes to the desire of the clergy to remove the odium from themselves. See note, reign Eliz.

† Oldys, 69. from Townshend's Hist. Collections.

‡ Oldys, 69.

Although in withstanding so arbitrary and rigid a law as this, Ralegh espoused the cause of the Catholics, as well as that of the Dissenters, his display of liberality, added to his avowed enmity to the Spanish court, drew upon him the satire of Father Parsons, who, under the title of a "*Lover of his Country*," inveighed bitterly in a libellous publication against some of the most eminent public characters of the time. Ralegh became an object of his invectives, and the cry of *Atheist*, that established watch-word of calumny, was raised against him. He was even stated to have formed a *school of Atheism*, in which the Old and the New Testament were derided, and a spirit of blasphemy infused into the minds of the scholars. But the enemies of Ralegh had, in this instance, a deeper source of hatred towards him than mere party rancour. He had been the avowed patron of every measure which conduced to diffuse information, and to promote tolerance and free enquiry. By no class of persons were proceedings such as these so much dreaded and discountenanced, as by the Jesuits, a learned but designing sect, who, by the weakness and ignorance of others, found their own power strengthened, and the influence of their superstitions extended. Among these, the first that established himself in England was Parsons, the son of a blacksmith of Somersetshire; once, a zealous Pro-

testant, and an eminent tutor of Oxford, where he was the first to introduce Protestant authors into the library of Baliol College. But, becoming Bursar of his college, he exercised such a notorious system of peculation, that, upon an enquiry being made into his conduct, he found it convenient to resign his fellowship. He afterwards travelled on the Continent, and becoming acquainted with the order of the Jesuits, his restless and intriguing temper of mind inclined him to enter eagerly into the spirit of that sect. In process of time, he rose to the dignity of Chief Penitentiary; and was appointed to superintend the English seminary at Rome, whence he was sent into England by the Pope, with instructions to establish his order, to expel Queen Elizabeth, and subvert the Protestant religion. For such a design, Parsons was admirably qualified, his character being a compound of duplicity and boldness, of enterprize and of caution. In conjunction with one Father Campion, he divided England into three parts, each of which was vigilantly, but with the utmost secrecy, watched by one or other of the associated emissaries. Campion remained in the north, while Parsons, who usually continued near London, introduced into Cambridge a young priest as a nobleman. By these agents the minds of the people were allured, inflamed, or intimidated, as opportunity offered, until the apprehension of Campion

disconcerted all their measures, and drove Parsons into Normandy. There he remained; and having, before his departure from England, given birth to the noted libel before referred to, containing chiefly appalling, and, in some instances, incredible relations of the Earl of Leicester's atrocities; he published, under the name of Doleman, a "Conference between a Gentleman, a Lawyer, and a Scholar," concerning the Succession to the Crown of England, dedicating it to the Earl of Essex, then the rising favourite.* This production was designed to reflect upon the government, and to subvert the authority of Queen Elizabeth. At her death, the exertions of this reverend father were directed to a fruitless endeavour to prevent the succession of James the First to the throne. †

1592. It was in the preceding year, that Ralegh, in conjunction with many other eminent persons, had aided in inflicting a deep wound upon the power of the Jesuits, by advising the Queen to issue a proclamation for the suppression of the Jesuitical seminaries, of which various branches, from the original institution by Philip the Second at Valladolid, had been esta-

* See this curious, and certainly ingenious and pointed work, written, like the preceding one, by the same author, with the spirit of a demon. Ed. 1641. Printed first without a name.

† Biog. Britan. art. Parsons.

blished in England. * The share which Ralegh had in this proceeding was never forgiven by the advocates of Spain, nor by those who, upon the plea of religion, as they called it, wished to see this country in some respects constituted like that nation. Happily for England, the power of the Jesuits, an engine of frightful ascendancy in all countries where it has been permitted, was thus, from the decision and wisdom of Elizabeth's councils, precluded from the exercise of its insinuating, but oppressive operations; but, unfortunately for Ralegh, the various insinuations thrown out against him were aided in their effect by an event which happened about this time, and which for a season affected his fortunes and his tranquillity.

Promoted by Elizabeth to be one of the Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber, Ralegh, who had neither the habits nor the soul of an idler, was constrained to come into very frequent communication with the ladies of the bed-chamber, but, in general, without producing many proofs of amity on either side: indeed he was often heard to say, that his fair associates "were like witches, who "could do no good, but might do harm."† This

* The establishment of Jesuitical seminaries in this country was found impracticable until after the year 1562; although Loyola, who founded the order in 1534, had signified to Cardinal Pole his desire of seeing it introduced into England. Note in Biog. from Carte's History of England.

† Bacon's Apothegms, New and Old, 295.

remark was remembered with bitter exultation, when it was discovered that there existed between Ralegh and the beautiful daughter of Sir Nicholas Throgmorton, an intimacy which would, had it happened in these days, have blasted for ever the reputation of the lady, who was also one of Elizabeth's personal attendants. This conduct was the more inexcusable in Ralegh, because the object of his addresses was unprotected by a father's care, Sir Nicholas Throgmorton having died in 1570*, suddenly, and not without some suspicions of his having been poisoned by the Earl of Leicester, in whose house he was at supper when he was attacked by a complaint which proved fatal. Sir Nicholas had ever been an object of dislike to that unprincipled nobleman, partly from his early adherence to the Somerset faction, and more immediately from a close alliance with the elder Cecil. The Earl pretended, however, great friendship towards him, and affecting to be summoned to the royal presence on the sudden return of the Queen to London, bade Sir Nicholas take his seat, and be served as he had been. The guest, it is said, obeyed the flattering command, and partook of a salad, to which he afterwards, on his death-bed, imputed the disease which killed him, but respecting the nature of

* Camden's Annals, p. 130, year 1570.

which accounts vary.* By some it was observed that he died of "Leicester's rheum," that nobleman being no mean artist in the faculty of poisoning†: by others, it was asserted to be an imposthume of the lungs, which caused his death. The circumstances of the Throgmorton family were not prosperous, Sir Nicholas, although descended from an ancient family, and allied by his mother to the house of Vaulx, and performing the arduous parts of a statesman and ambassador, having never risen higher than to the offices of Chamberlain of England, and Chief Butler; employments which have been compared to an "empty covered cup, pretending to some state, but affording no considerable profit."‡ Sir Nicholas, to use the words of Camden, "was a man of great experience, passing sharp wit, and singular diligence; who busily attempting many things, in Queen Marie's days, hardly saved his life by his eloquent wisdome."‖ His sound and energetic mind seems, in some respects, to have descended to his daughter, notwithstanding the error of her early years; and had that indiscretion never occurred, few feminine characters

* See that most iniquitous book, entitled "Leicester's Commonwealth," p. 27. The story is accredited by Camden, and by many other contemporary writers.

† Fuller's Worthies of Warwickshire.

‡ Camden. ‖ Camden, p. 130.

could have appeared more formed, in every sense, to have accorded with the uncommon attributes of Ralegh, than that of Elizabeth Throgmorton. By report of her contemporaries, she is said, in the first place, to have possessed personal attractions in an eminent degree; and, in her picture, which in the time of Oldys, the diligent biographer of Ralegh, remained in the possession of a descendant of Ralegh *, she is represented as a fair, handsome woman, attired in the fashion of the day, and with the splendour which Ralegh was wont so eminently to display. This circumstance, though comparatively unimportant, was perhaps of consequence in the eyes of Ralegh, who particularly instructed his son not to marry an uncomely woman.† She was in birth his equal, and, in age, eighteen years his junior. But whilst these adventitious circumstances were in favour of their mutual happiness, the qualities of which her subsequent history does best vouch, and which the events of a calamitous life drew forth, were singularly adapted to the part which was in life allotted to her. She was capable of a devotion to her husband beyond the power of absence, persecution, and the ruin of all her temporal prosperity, on his account, to diminish. She had activity and resolution which well became the

* Oldys, 145.

† See his Instructions to his Son, and to Posterity, in Ralegh's Remains, duodecimo, 1664, p. 80.

wife of a hero. She had disinterestedness worthy of the name of Ralegh. In her exertions for those who were dear to her, she evinced the judgment and steadiness of a man; in her constancy and disregard of personal comforts and considerations, the single-heartedness and tenderness of a woman's nature. Her deviation from the delicacy of the feminine character was not, in her own times, viewed with the unrelenting, yet wholesome, severity with which the world visits it in the present day. By her family Ralegh seems to have been forgiven, since we afterwards find her brother, Sir Arthur Throgmorton, associated with him in his maritime enterprizes. * By Queen Elizabeth, it is to be feared, the sin was visited, more as a scandal to her court, and an offence to her own paramount charms, than as a dereliction from morality. Soon after the exposure of their fault, Ralegh was united to her in marriage, an union pre-eminently marked by vicissitudes, but cheered by their uninterrupted affection. On every important occurrence of his life, we find Ralegh addressing her as the confidential repository of his joys and afflictions; sometimes in the language of affectionate consolation in their common bereavements, always in that of regard, implicit trust, and respect. For some time, however, during the early days of

* Oldys, 103.

their married life, their mutual attachment seemed to bring only separation and sorrow. The erring young lady was dismissed from the court, to the contagion of which she probably owed her disgrace; and Ralegh was imprisoned for some months, as it appears from a letter addressed by Sir Robert Cecil to Sir Arthur Gorges, in the Tower.* Whilst thus confined, he one day, sitting at his window, perceived by a collection of boats and royal barges, near Blackfriars' Bridge, that the Queen was passing. It was soon intimated to him that she was visiting the Lieutenant of the Ordnance, Sir George Carew, in whose custody he was pining away hours of obscurity and inaction. Having gazed and sighed a long time, Ralegh, either envying the gay and the free, who passed in busy succession by him, or hoping to make an impression upon the vain heart of the Queen, resolved to disguise himself, and to get into a boat, to see Her Majesty, declaring that if he were prevented, "*it would break his heart.*" But Sir George Carew would not permit so audacious an attempt; and Ralegh, struggling to be free, a battle ensued between them, which might have proved fatal to one of the parties, had not a timely mediator intervened, who, according to his own account, "*played the*

* Bircle, 2728.

"*stickler* * *between them.*" This occurrence was, however, conveyed to Lord Burleigh †, and probably wrought somewhat upon the Queen, to whom Ralegh, in common with other favoured courtiers, professed that extravagant species of devotion with which few women, except Elizabeth, would have been flattered. What was the duration of Ralegh's imprisonment does not appear; but it is evident, from a letter of Sir Robert Cecil's, written at Dartmouth, in 1592, and preserved in the State Paper Office, that, even when engaged in public business, Ralegh was attended by a "keeper," and that he felt all the inconveniences and disgrace of a state criminal. By this letter, now for the first time printed (in the Appendix), Cecil speaks of Ralegh's "brutish offence;" yet it appears, from the pains taken to investigate some matters which are unexplained, that there were other and deeper sources of offence to the Queen than the intrigue with her attendant; and, from the tenour of the epistle, there is considerable reason to conclude that the Queen's displeasure had some reference to Ralegh's appropriation of certain prizes, which Cecil, with other commissioners, was appointed to superintend. See Appendix C.

* "Stickler," according to Sir Walter Scott, a kind of second, who, with a long stick, kept the combatants in a duel at proper distances until the combat began.

† See Birch, 27, 28.

It was before Ralegh was sentenced to a temporary durance, that he had, in the House of Commons (in 1592), displayed his allegiance to the Queen, in a manner apparently highly satisfactory to her, and advantageous to himself. Elizabeth, impoverished by the wars with Spain, had demanded, rather than requested, subsidies from her parliament. Ralegh entered zealously into her views, and suggested a plan for paying the subsidies; but he strenuously opposed a survey of the wealth of the nation, a scheme proposed by some, but which he deemed likely to diminish the national credit. The question of encouraging foreigners, to the detriment of English merchants, having arisen, he had maintained that denization ought not to circumvent birthright, and that tolerance, as citizens, to foreigners, rendered us almost strangers at home, destroying that reciprocation of benefits in which social intercourse ought to consist. He represented that, in harbouring foreigners, we maintain those who dislike our church, and give liberty and encouragement to members of a nation which would not, in all probability, return the obligation; disloyalty, he contended, was thus fostered, and an encroaching spirit in foreign adventurers, engendered. That Ralegh appears to have carried these notions too far, will readily be allowed, by those who may even reject the more enlightened views of mo-

dern policy: for it seems to admit of a doubt that the industrious portion of any community would not, by their presence and exertions, contribute to the spirit of emulation, upon which advancement in all the arts so materially depends.

But whilst, by attention to public business, he was now gradually establishing in the mind of Elizabeth a confidence in his talents; yet, as a courtier, Ralegh was still in disgrace. It was not, however, the policy of Elizabeth to allow her able and valiant subjects to remain in inaction, whether they were in or out of favour: and it was not long before occasion offered to prove the zeal and bravery of her commanders.

Early in the spring of the year 1596, the Queen had been apprized that a Spanish fleet was again in preparation, collected from the wrecks and remains of the Armada, in order to begin a fresh invasion of her territories upon the coast of Ireland. Elizabeth, judging that it would, in this instance, be far more glorious to commence the attack, equipped a fleet of one hundred and fifty sail, commanded by Lord Howard of Effingham, at whose charge, in conjunction with Essex, the expenses of the armament were, in a great measure, defrayed. The secret object of the expedition was Cadiz, the situation of which afforded the enemy great facility in carrying on his designs against the British dominions. The Earl of Essex, to whom the principal command of the land forces

was committed, was a favourite with the people, who are ever ready to prize those qualities which they can most easily comprehend. According to the general opinion of him, "no man was more ambitious of glory by virtue, no man more careless of all things else." * Yet he was accounted in few respects a good commander, was head-strong and rash, and was frequently unfortunate in his undertakings; a circumstance imputed by the astrologers of those superstitious times to the "disastrous aspect of Mars, which, in the hour of his nativity, shined most adversely upon him in the eleventh house of Heaven." † By less superstitious reasoners, the failure of most of the enterprizes in which Essex had the command, may be attributed to his precipitate temper, which displayed itself even in the ordinary and trivial actions of his life. ‡ The very qualities which occasioned his ruin as a courtier, militated against his success as a general. An indifferent pupil of Lord Leicester, his father-in-law and patron, who, it was said, "was wont to put all his passions in his

* Camden, 553. † Camden, 552.

‡ In the famous parallel between him and the Duke of Buckingham, Essex is described as holding his toilet with his room full of suitors: "his eyes, his ears, his head, and face employed at once; his eyes to letters, his ears to petitioners, his head and face to his gentleman attendants. Throw a cloak over his shoulders, and he was gone." Reliq. Wottoniæ, 16.

pocket *," Essex could neither conceal his emotions, nor, what was far more important, regulate them: so that he not only "carried his love and hatred on his forehead," but manifested either the one or the other upon too slight grounds, intemperately, and often unjustly. † Yet his resentments proceeded rather "from the weakness of his judgment, than from the malice of his nature," and whilst he sometimes allowed them to master his better feelings, he was incapable of deliberately consenting to the oppression of an innocent man. ‡

Such were the qualities possessed by the chief in command upon the expedition to Cadiz: to these must be added, dauntless gallantry, and an insatiable thirst for fame; Essex in these latter respects, alone resembling his coadjutor, Ralegh. It was, therefore, judged advisable to temper the rashness, and generous, dauntless demeanour of Essex, with the experience of Lord Howard of Effingham, mature in council, and deliberate in judgment, though prompt and energetic in action. The fleet, the sovereign controul of which was placed in the hands of Lord Howard of Effingham, was divided into three squadrons, each of which was allotted to the respective command of Essex, Lord Thomas Howard, and Ralegh.

* Parallel between the Earl of Essex and the Duke of Buckingham. Reliquiæ Wottoniæ, p. 31.

† Ibid. 30. ‡ Clarendon's Characters.

Neither did Ralegh occupy the second post in command, that distinction being assigned to Lord Thomas Howard, probably as a tribute to the merits and services of his father, the High Admiral, who had, already, evinced some jealousy of the ascendancy which Essex had gained over the affections of the Queen. *

The fleet sailed from Plymouth in the beginning of June, 1596, and proceeded without being descried, and consequently without interruption, along the coast of Portugal, to Cape Saint Vincent, where every captain was permitted to open his instructions, which had hitherto been sealed, with directions not to examine them, except in case of separation of the vessels from their respective squadrons. Upon the twentieth day of the month, the fleet cast anchor on the west side of the island of St. Leon, which is joined by a causeway, to the peninsula on which Cadiz stands. Essex was here urgent that the forces should be landed, a proposition which was resisted by the other commanders, and especially by the Lord Admiral. On the ensuing day, it was, however, judged expedient to commence an attack upon the Spanish vessels, a counsel which was received by the impatient Earl with so much delight, that he threw up his hat in a transport of joy. The assault was chiefly committed to Lord Thomas

* Life of Lord Charles Howard, Biographia Britannica.

Howard, and to Ralegh, who, in a ship called the Warspight, caused a Spanish vessel to fall back. After being first retained, and then floated in by the fluctuations of the tide, the Spanish fleet was completely defeated, the principal ship, the Saint Philip, burned, and several other vessels. The pitying care of Lord Effingham, an Englishman not only in valour but in humanity, saved, however, several large vessels, and rescued from drowning many poor and panic-struck sailors, who had cast themselves into the sea, from fear of capture or death at the hands of the besiegers.

It now remained to prevent all communication between the town and the continent, and to storm the nearest gate. In this service of danger Essex, full of military ardour and forgetful of personal security, was foremost; but Sir Francis Vere, one of his council of war, had the good fortune to break open the gate. Ralegh, in honourable association with the two Howards, and the other principal officers, broke in, following several English leaders, who, covered with blood, and expiring from their wounds, were knighted by Essex and Effingham on the spot. In this scene of confusion, victory was announced, the Spaniards retiring to the town-house and castle, both of which they were soon induced to surrender, upon conditions advantageous to their conquerors.

The next employment assigned to Ralegh

was to pass up the Channel, in order to fire certain merchants' ships which had retired to Port Real. To save these vessels, a ransom of eighty thousand ducats was offered, but they were eventually consumed; the policy of the English government, at that time, enacting as a main point the destruction of the Spanish navy, in preference to the pursuit of plunder.*

After much consultation, it was determined not to leave an English garrison in Cadiz, although Essex offered to remain in it with four hundred men. In pursuance with the sad necessity of war, in this instance, as far as related to the Spaniards, alone aggressive as yet on the part of Elizabeth, Cadiz was cruelly devastated, the island of St. Leon despoiled, and the forts razed, the triumphant English bearing away the pillaged property of those who had once been opulent and secure. Impatient to reach more peaceful scenes, Ralegh, in conjunction with all the other commanders, except the younger Howard, opposed the desire evinced by Essex still to pursue other detachments of the Spanish fleet towards the Azores; and, returning to England, left him with a small portion of the troops endeavouring to track the enemy on the Spanish shores.

The wealth derived from this expedition to most of the land commanders was considerable;

* Camden, 463.

but Ralegh, either from being chiefly deputed to naval services, or from some other cause, remained unenriched. According to his own account, he "got from a splinter a lame leg, and deformed," and few other trophies of the victory, in which he had a share. His account of his profits was, indeed, far from being encouraging, or cheering. "For the rest," he says, "either I spoke too late, or it was otherwise resolved: I have not been wanting in good words, or exceeding kind and regardful usage; but have possession of naught but poverty and pain." Yet every honourable tribute was paid to his valour, even by those who doubted his sincerity, or contemned his political conduct. The Lord High Admiral honoured him by an especial mention, and Sir Anthony Standon, an eye-witness, wrote to the Lord High Treasurer, that "no man, in his judgment, did better than Sir Walter Ralegh."*

It was not, however, long after his return from Cadiz, that Ralegh obtained the consent of the Queen to the pursuance of a scheme which appeared to his sanguine mind to promise both wealth and fame, but which, subsequently, involved his latter days in perplexity and danger.†

This plan had for its object, Guiana, a part of South America which had then only been

* Birch, i. 35.

† Birch's Memoirs of Queen Elizabeth, ii. 54.

visited by the Spaniards: to anticipate that adventurous nation in the seizure of uncolonized lands, and in the discovery of precious minerals, was the avowed object of this, and of most similar enterprizes of the period. It had long been a subject of meditation to Ralegh, who declares, in his dedication of the History of Guiana, that "many years since he had knowledge, by relation, of that mighty, rich, and beautiful empire of Guiana, and of that great and golden city which the Spaniards call El Dorado, and the naturals Manoa." * To investigate this boasted region, afterwards the source of so much reproach and so much calamity to him, he resolved to set forth, having previously sent his servants, Jacob Whiddon and Captain Parker, who, the year before, had brought home reports that there was such a place as El Dorado, although they found it to be six hundred miles farther than they anticipated. Whiddon, however, returned with so favourable an account of the riches of the country, that Ralegh resolved to investigate it;—a project in which he was encouraged by the concurrence of Sir Robert Cecil and Lord Howard, both men of profound judgment, and of caution and experience. †

He prepared, at his own charge, a squadron, composed of five ships, besides barges, wher-

* See Hakluyt's Voyages, vol. iii.

† Birch, 29.

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ries, and other requisite aid; but, either from deficiency of means or of information, he omitted, as it appears from his own account, taking with him such supplies of men and of instruments for mining as seemed essential for his purpose of investigation. Concerning this voyage he was assailed with reports of the most malignant character, and little immediate reward was derived from the expenses and hazards which he encountered. He describes himself to have set out on this arduous undertaking "in the winter of his life;" to have "undergone many constructions, to have been accompanied with many sorrows, with labour, hunger, heat, sickness, and peril."* "From myself," he observes, "I have de- "served no thanks, for I am returned a beggar, "and withered; but that I might have bettered "my poor estate, it shall appear by the following "discourse, if I had not only respected her "Majesty's future honour and riches. It be- "came not the former fortune in which I lived "to go journeys of piccory; and it had sorted "ill with the offices of honour, which by her "Majesty's grace, I hold this day in England, "to run from cape to cape, and from place to "place, for the pillage of ordinary prizes."†

In 1595 he set sail from Plymouth; and, after taking in fresh provisions at the Canaries, he was

* See Dedication to his Narrative.

† See Voyage to Guiana.

joined by a ship belonging to Lord Charles Howard; and in the middle of March arrived at Trinidad, where he remained four or five days. Of this island Ralegh has given an account, in the interesting and animated style which characterizes all his writings. He mentions, indeed, but slightly, the celebrated Pitch Lake Brea, which has since been found to cover one hundred and fifty acres; but expatiates upon the Mangrove oysters, a species of natural production, then probably new to him; and he appears to have made very minute observations upon the produce of this region. At Trinidad he gained such intelligence as the Spaniards resident there could afford him respecting Guiana: he cherished, nevertheless, at that time, a design of revenging himself upon Antonio de Berreo, the governor of San Joseph, the capital of the Spanish settlement there, for the destruction of eight men, whom De Berreo had betrayed into the woods, in the preceding year, under amicable pretences. In the execution of his purpose, Ralegh manifested an indifference to human suffering, which, however disregarded by conquerors in general, might have claimed some consideration from a philosophical warrior. Justifying his conduct to his own mind, with the pretence of revenging the cruelty shown by De Berreo to the native princes of the soil, and explaining it to his country, by the expediency

of not leaving a hostile colony to annoy him on his return from Guiana, Ralegh stormed and burned the city, taking De Berreo prisoner, and carrying him to his own vessel.

To this commander he made, however, every reparation in his power for the injury done him, by treating him in such a manner as his rank required, and his character merited, De Berreo as Ralegh affirms, "being both very valiant and liberal, a gentleman of great assuredness, and of a great heart." From him Ralegh learned that Guiana was six hundred miles farther from the sea than he had been before informed; but this fact he sedulously concealed from his companions, who would have been dismayed by the intelligence. He then proceeded four hundred miles of this journey, leaving his ships at anchor, and taking with him the small barges and an old galley, in which he contrived with great inconvenience to stow one hundred persons; but the lateness of the season, and the overflowing of the rivers, prevented them from reaching what he expected to prove the vicinity of El Dorado, the object of the enterprize. The effect of Ralegh's labours was, in fact, little else than a more extensive investigation of the country than had hitherto been made; and the surrender into his hands of several petty princes, to whom he extolled the name of Elizabeth, and showed her picture, which, he declares, "they so admired

"and honoured, as it had been easy to have made "them idolatrous thereof." Such was the flattery with which even Ralegh did not disdain to season his works.*

Of the country through which he passed, and of its produce, both mineral and vegetable, he has given a long and minute account; the fidelity of which, from some appearances of exaggeration, has been generally doubted.

To the advocates of Ralegh the description of his progress through Guiana has appeared, from internal evidence, to be written in good faith; and to be a genuine narrative, coming from the pen of an ingenious but lively writer: by others, less credulous, it has been thought that the imagination of Ralegh, heightened by a sanguine temper, gave splendour to that scenery, and especially to those hills which he describes to be sparkling "with stones of the colour of gold and silver;" and that it was his object, as it undoubtedly seemed to be his interest, to heighten the representation of these appearances. Respecting these accounts, the veracity of Ralegh was, at a subsequent period of his life, strictly called to account, and mercilessly weighed; and posterity has, in this point, been scarcely more favourable to him than his contemporaries.

The results of his enterprize were found to be rather surmises than facts, dreams of splendour

* Voyage to Guiana.

instead of realizations of value. It is scarcely too harsh a judgment to affirm, that the credit of Ralegh was considerably shaken by the narrative which he penned, upon his return to England.

His statements respecting the mineral productions of Guiana were, in the first place, rash and unqualified, and, to say the least, threw some degree of doubt upon his discrimination in such matters. In alluding to them, he thus expresses himself:—"For the rest, *which myself* have seen, "I will promise these things that follow, and "know to be true. Those who are desirous to "discover and to see many nations may be "satisfied within this river (Oronooko), which "bringeth forth so many arms and branches, "leading to several counties and provinces, about "2000 miles east and west, and 800 miles north "and south, and of these the most rich either in "gold or in other merchandizes. The common "soldier shall here fight for gold, and pay him-"self, instead of pence, with plates of half a foot "broad, whereas he breaketh his bones in other "wars for provant and penury."* Assertions such as these, and promises of the most dazzling and alluring nature, abound in the narrative of his first voyage to Guiana; a work calculated in the highest degree to ensnare the fancy of the adventurous and speculative part of the community, and obviously written with that intention.

* Voyage to Guiana.

Every circumstance which he relates is touched with the colouring of fancy or of artifice; every stone which the travellers picked up is said to promise "gold or silver by its complexion;" the hills, too, abound with that description of ore "called by the Spaniards madre del oro;" in short, the narrative reminds the reader of the well known description of Calypso's island, where all was allurement, and seeming luxuriance of goodness. And the notion of fiction becomes irresistible, and is confirmed, when the author proceeds to tell us of a tribe in Guiana "having their eyes in their shoulders, and their mouths in the middle of their breasts, and a long train of hair growing backward between their shoulders;" which, he continues, "though it may be thought a mere fable, yet for mine own part I am resolved it is true, because every child in the provinces of Arromaia and Canuri affirm the same."* After such a specimen of fabulous composition as this, it is almost needless to remark, that Ralegh's accounts of the climate, even allowing for variations of time, are wholly at variance with truth, and are evidently tinged with partiality. According to his account, "the country "is so healthful, that, notwithstanding every "possible imprudence on the part of his com-"panions, they found no calentura†, nor other of

* Voyage to Guiana.

† Intermittent fever, or ague.

"those pestilent diseases which dwell in all hot "regions." A very different description is, nevertheless, afforded by the intelligent Doctor Bancroft, who visited it in 1796: by him, we are informed, that the natives were liable to a frightful and contagious species of leprosy, and that intermitting fevers were endemial near the sea.* Subsequent travellers have also denounced the climate as aguish, and likely to engender malignant fevers; circumstances which are easily to be accounted for by the inundations, and by the masses of animal and vegetable matter which settle and putrefy in the waters, occasioned by the heavy rains.†

This discrepancy between the accounts given by Ralegh and those furnished by other travellers is the more remarkable in this instance, because, wherever a favourable report of the soil or produce could be conveyed, the details which Ralegh's pen affords correspond almost exactly with those of other writers on Guiana. In his representations of the variety and occasional grandeur of the scenery, of the luxuriance and nature of the timber, and of the variations of the seasons, he is borne out by the testimony of less interested authors‡; and he appears to have

* Bancroft's Essay on the Natural History of Guiana, p. 397.

† Malte Brun, vol. v. part 2. p. 554., from Leblond de la Fièvre Jaune.

‡ See Oldys, p. 88.

studied and described the manners, and religious superstitions of the natives, with great accuracy.*

In mitigation of the strong charges of exaggeration brought against Ralegh, it must be observed, that extravagant notions at that time prevailed in Europe respecting the treasures of Guiana; not, as Dr. Bancroft, at a much later period, remarks, "perhaps wholly chimerical;" in his opinion, Guiana, contained "undoubtedly mines of gold and silver, since the Spaniards have discovered some near the river Oronooko."† In reply to this assertion, it may be observed, that little importance ought to be attached to the popular notions of the times, this region being then almost unexplored. Of Guiana, Ralegh remarks, that it was in his time "unsacked, unwrought," her surface untorn by the spoiler, "her graves unopened for gold," and it remained, during the lapse of two successive centuries, almost equally unknown, until Bancroft, a traveller unversed, as he avows himself, in scientific lore, visited it in 1796. This ingenious and pleasing writer ascribes the uncertainty which prevailed respecting the mineral produce of Guiana to the policy of the Dutch, to whom it was ceded in 1674, by the English, in exchange for New York.‡ By the Dutch it was planted with

* See Bancroft, pp. 13. 17. 22. Also, account of Guiana in Churchill's collection, vol. v. p. 548.

† Bancroft, p. 22. ‡ Ibid. p. 13.

canes; and the discovery and working of mines prohibited, from the experience of those ill effects which accrued to Spain from her acquisitions of Peru and Chili. * The account, of Bancroft, which is somewhat in favour of Ralegh's veracity, must, however, yield to that of later and more able observers of the region in question. No precious metals have, to this day, been discovered in Guiana, few of the minerals being metalliferous; and the medicinal plants of Guiana constituting its most valuable produce. †

The credulity, or rather, as it has been considered by the world, the falsehood of Ralegh, may be extenuated by the fact, that he was neither the first traveller nor the last that extolled the treasures of Guiana upon his personal observation. In 1541, Philip de Hutten, a German knight, had described the houses of a certain town there which he had visited "to shine as if they had been overlaid with gold." It has since been conjectured, that he may have mistaken talc for gold, an error which may also have been committed by Ralegh. ‡ Subsequently to Ralegh's first expedition in 1609, Robert Harcourt, of Stanton Harcourt, again investigated Guiana, with a design of planting it, and with a patent from James I. to that

* Bancroft, p. 22.

† Malte Brun's Geography, vol. v. part 2. p. 555.

‡ Malte Brun, vol. v. part 2. p. 563.

effect. This gentleman, both from his own observation, and from intelligence afforded him by the inhabitants of Trinidad, confirmed, in most particulars, the account of Ralegh, and evinced a degree of faith scarcely less than that displayed by his predecessor, in the existence of remote treasures within the bosom of Guiana; he extolled, in high terms, Ralegh's narrative, which he calls an "effectual and faithful account;" praising, at the same time, the hardihood with which Ralegh had pursued an enterprize which was only to be frustrated by grievous and unforeseen accidents. *

This tribute, proceeding from a rival navigator, and so shortly after the first voyage to Guiana, might be considered as affording material evidence in favour of Ralegh's veracity, were it borne out by the investigations of later times. But the notions of Guiana which prevailed in Ralegh's day, have, by modern research, been proved to resemble the wildest and most improbable dreams of romance. By many, even intelligent persons, of the 16th and 17th centuries, the story of the Lake Panama, the sands of which were said to be of gold, was not discredited, and a belief was entertained in the existence of the fabulous city of Manoa, or El Dorado, near the river Oronooko. The popular designation of the country was, indeed,

* Harleian Miscellany, vol. iii. p. 174.

"El Dorado," or, in some parts, the country of the Amazons; Guiana being a name applied to it by the Indians.* Little, in short, was known of it; even the celebrated Camden adopted Ralegh's highly coloured descriptions without a doubt, referring the reader of his own pages to an "elegant book" of Sir Walter Ralegh's, wherein he most accurately describeth the countries, "as if he had been born and bred there."†

No sooner had Ralegh returned to England, than he felt the full extent of those annoyances and inconveniences which a sanguine disposition experiences from the incredulous, or perhaps slanderous portion of the community. He brought home, it is true, a quantity of ore, which was proved by the comptroller of the Mint, and in Goldsmith's Hall, and was found to contain 26·900 pounds a ton.‡ By some persons, the quality of this gold was disputed; by others, it was asserted that it had been purchased in Barbary, carried on to Guiana, and afterwards conveyed to this country. It is possible that Queen Elizabeth was somewhat influenced by these rumours; for although she received Ralegh again into her favour, she gave him no assurance of assistance in any future voyage to Guiana. He represented, indeed, the capability

* Bancroft, p. 281. † Camden, p. 444.

‡ Note in Cayley, to Narrative of Discovery of Guiana, vol. ii. p. 165.

of retaining the whole empire of Guiana by the erection of one large fort or town; and the facility of re-uniting companies, scattered over the country, by the great river Oroñooko. This territory had been already offered to Henry the Seventh by Columbus, whose representations of its riches was thought to be incredible; and Elizabeth appears to have adopted, in this instance, the cautious policy of her grandfather, whom, in many points, she resembled. Ralegh concludes his work by declaring that it would "ill sort with the favours that he had received to abuse her Highness the Queen with fables or imaginations;" and, recommending her to employ all those soldiers and officers who are younger brethren in the enterprize, he also expresses his conviction, that if his counsels were followed, "there would soon be a house of contractation of more receipt for Guiana than there is now in Seville for the West Indies."* But neither this scheme nor any other, for the colonization of Guiana, was pursued by Elizabeth, who was either deterred by the expense of such a project, or doubtful of the truth of Ralegh's statements. Yet, in the following year, he again sent out two ships at his own expense, under the command of Captain Keymis, with the aid of 500*l.* advanced to him by the Lord Treasurer, and a new ship, the very hull of

* Discov. Guiana, Birch, vol. ii. p. 234.

which stood its owner, Sir Robert Cecil, 800*l.* * Keymis, on his return, published an account of further discoveries, and dedicated the work to Ralegh. †

The voyage to Guiana, with its acquisition of great riches in perspective, tended greatly to reinstate Ralegh in the favour of Elizabeth, who justly testified her approbation of exertions which tended to improve nautical skill, to extend the British power, and to increase the contents of her treasury.

1596.

* Cayley, from Sydney Papers, 284.

† Birch, vol. i. p. 30.

CHAP. III.

THE ISLAND VOYAGE: — MORTIFICATIONS SUSTAINED BY RALEGH: — FAILURE OF THE EXPEDITION. — STATE OF AFFAIRS AT HOME. — DECLINE, AND SUBSEQUENT RUIN OF ESSEX: — THE SHARE WHICH RALEGH HAD IN THAT AFFAIR.

1597. THE siege of Cadiz, justly called by Lord Clarendon "Essex fortunatest "piece,*" was shortly followed by an enterprize similar in its object and arrangement, but far less brilliant in the success of its operations. Of this expedition, which, from the nature of its destination, was called the Island Voyage, Ralegh would probably have had the command, had not the superior influence of Essex intervened. The Queen was now entirely reconciled to him who had explored Guiana, and assisted in the reduction of Cadiz; and, although she continued for some time to suspend Ralegh from his post as captain of the guard, she suffered him, early in the spring, to entertain hopes of being allowed to resume that office. In June, Ralegh being

* Parallel between Essex and Buckingham. Reliquiæ Wottoniæ, p. 31.

presented to her by Sir Robert Cecil, he was received with great affability, rode in her majesty's train the same evening, and was permitted entrance into her privy chamber, with the advantage of holding conferences with her, in the same manner as before his banishment from court. *

Under these favourable circumstances, and seconded by the interest of the two Cecils, who were at that time his powerful friends, Ralegh appeared to hold a station in the queen's favour, which might justify expectations of being henceforward the chief in command on any maritime undertaking of danger and responsibility; for he was at this time undoubtedly the most approved and experienced naval officer that Elizabeth could appoint. Effingham was ill, and declined service; and Hawkins and Drake were no more, those great men having died during the preceding year, within two months of each other, from the effects of disappointment and anxiety in an unsuccessful expedition against the Spaniards. To Ralegh, therefore, might the most important trusts appear naturally to belong, by right of age and character.

But Elizabeth never, until Essex rose to manhood, displayed her feminine weakness in its utmost extent; nor did she, during the sad,

* Sydney Papers, vol. ii. 24. 27. 42. 44. 54.

and almost degrading, residue of her days, ever cease to act from impulses, which were stimulated either by the hopes of a passionate attachment, or by the stings of unrequited affection. To gratify the ambition of her favourite, she placed him, therefore, without one consideration of justice, at the head of an expedition which he was but partially qualified to direct. There are, probably, few situations which require more patient endurance, than that of a man who is conscious of his own powers; who is confident, not from arrogance, but from experience, of his abilities; and thirsting for an honourable distinction, and who finds himself, with unmerited partiality, placed beneath the level of one who has neither equal claims to distinction, nor strength of intellect sufficient to create such claims by future services. Such was the situation, and such may have been the sentiments, of Ralegh on seeing Essex promoted to a principal post; whilst he, far more advanced in knowledge, as well as in years, was required to play a subordinate part to a man in mental capacity greatly his inferior. From these feelings, secret, but doubtless strong, it is probable that much of Ralegh's subsequent aversion to the unfortunate Essex proceeded; and it is also probable, that from this irritating source, and from a consciousness of inferiority on the part of the Earl, some of the disasters, and many of the annoyances of their common undertaking, arose.

Essex was, however, at this time intoxicated with success; and well has he been described as having been "drawn into the fatal circle" of a public career, for which he was by nature but indifferently calculated. This island-voyage was, indeed the beginning of his decline in public estimation, and consequently in the confidence of his royal mistress, who was ever attentive to the indications of popular opinion.*

The purpose of Queen Elizabeth, in this her last undertaking against the Spaniards, was to destroy their fleet at Ferrol, or any of their vessels containing treasures from the West Indies; and to conquer and garrison the Azore islands, that of Terceira, the most important, although not the largest, being especially marked out as an object of attack. †

The fleet was divided into three squadrons, commanded by Essex, Lord Thomas Howard, and, lastly, Ralegh. Under Essex, Sir Charles Blount, afterwards Lord Mountjoy, commanded the land forces, an appointment which gave great offence to Sir Francis Vere, who was marshal of the army. It appears, also, that Ralegh had a concern in some quarrel with Vere; for Essex, on arriving at Weymouth, deemed it expedient to insist upon the two knights shaking hands, an

* Parallel between Essex and Bucks, 3.

† Oldys, iii.

act of reconciliation which was performed, according to Sir Francis Vere, "the more willingly, "because there had nothing passed between us "to blemish reputation."*

Between De Vere and Ralegh there was, however, a great degree of enmity; a circumstance which the former, in his commentaries, attributes to envy of the notice taken of him by the Earl of Essex. It was arranged that Ralegh should take precedence of De Vere by sea; and that De Vere, in his capacity as marshal, should have the precedence by land.† It was an additional cause of mortification to Ralegh in this voyage, that the principal officers were mostly either his personal foes, or, what amounted nearly to the same, the peculiar friends of Essex. Even Sir Charles Blount, recently the rival of the Earl, was now his sworn ally, becoming afterwards, indeed, his relation, by his scandalous marriage with Penelope Devereux, the sister of the Earl, and even at the time of her union with Mountjoy the wife of Lord Rich. Trifling and hasty disputes become to generous minds, in some cases inducements to good-will and motives to good actions. Such was the nature of Essex, that he could not only forgive but cherish those who manfully and honourably opposed him. It was still fresh in the memory of the

* Camden, p. 471. † Biog. Brittan. Art. Vere.

people, that Blount had excited the jealousy of the Earl by wearing round his arm a queen of chess enamelled, which had been given him by Elizabeth, as a reward for his success in the tilt-yard. Some unguarded expressions, implying that "every fool had now his favour," were repeated from Essex to Blount, who immediately challenged him. They fought in Marybone Park, and Essex was wounded in the thigh. The affair came to the ears of the Queen, who swore her hereditary oath (by God's death) that she "would have some one take Essex down, and "teach him manners."* This discipline restored peace, and the rivals became friends.† Sir George Carew was appointed lieutenant of the ordnance, and Sir Christopher Blount chief colonel. These men were principally adherents or friends of Essex, and were joined by his partizan, and subsequently fellow-sufferer, the Earl of Southampton, and by various other noblemen and knights, all with "their feathers waving and "gay clothes," a vanity peculiar to the English in war, according to the opinion of Camden. The important charge of victualling the forces having been assigned to Ralegh, he undertook to find provisions during three months for 6,000 men, at the rate of nine-pence per diem. Bride-

* Camden, p. 552.

† Naunton's Regalia Fragmenta, p. 19.

well, Winchester House, and Durham House, were given to him as magazines. Ralegh protesting that he should be a loser by this agreement, it was remarked, that "few people were of that opinion except himself."* After the fleet had been two days at sea, directions were given to each squadron to proceed severally to Ferrol and to the Groyne (Corunna), in order to surprize a portion of the Spanish fleet in their harbours, and to intercept other of its squadrons, on their passage from India, at the Azores. By this plan the English expected to gain the sole sovereignty of the ocean; and Essex gave out openly, that he intended either to defeat the Spanish fleet, or to sacrifice himself for his country. Scarcely were the squadrons forty leagues from Plymouth when a tempest assailed them. A thick mist enveloped every object; and the thunder was only surpassed in horror by the agitated waves, upon which the vessels rode powerless. This warfare of the elements lasted four days, and completely subdued the courage of the stoutest hearts, so that all were rejoiced to hail the friendly harbour of Plymouth, and of other towns on that coast. The ship of Lord Howard of Effingham, the High Admiral, was shattered, and the sailors were so intimidated, that some of them, to the disgrace of Englishmen, withdrew

* Collins's Sydney Papers, vol. ii. 37—44.

to their peaceful homes on shore.* After some recruiting, the fleet again set sail, but were again detained a whole month by weather in the Downs, and their provisions all spent. At that time there were no means of quickly replenishing such diminished stores. It became necessary to disband all the land forces, to send away many of the smaller ships, and to abandon all thoughts of going either to Ferrol or the Groyne. The chief officers then deliberated as to the propriety of proceeding to the Azores, and were all in favour of that undertaking except Vere, who maintained the hazard, and positive dishonour, of such an enterprize. Upon this dilemma, Essex and Ralegh hastened to the Queen, who, after listening to the extravagant scheme of Essex, to attack the Spanish fleet at all hazards, left it to her commanders to determine their own course.

After the two officers had returned to Plymouth, the armament was at length put to sea again, but was again separated when within sight of Spain; and the cross-yard of Ralegh's ship being broken, he was left behind the rest. In this situation, he in vain endeavoured to assist the designs of Essex, by sending a pinnace after him with the information that the Spanish fleet had left Ferrol for the Azores. Meanwhile Essex and his companions had resolved to sail directly

* Camden.

for the Azores, having seen the impracticability of attempting to fire the Spaniards in their own harbour. Ralegh had endeavoured to take the same course, but, having lost his track, he rejoined not the fleet until it had reached the island of Flores, where he found Essex filled with rage and suspicion against him. Essex, however, received him with apparent kindness, and apologized that he had previously sent despatches to England, branding Ralegh as a deserter of the fleet; a course to which the natural impetuosity of Essex, and the officious suggestions of the base spirits that often throng around the rash and thoughtless, had impelled him.

Whilst the fleet lay at anchor before Flores, a council of war was held to discuss the expediency of conquering and laying waste, or of garrisoning these islands, which afforded places of refreshment to the Spanish ships trading to the Indies. It was decided that Terceira should not be attempted until after the smaller islands had been subdued. To Essex and to Ralegh were assigned the capture of Fayall; to the Lord Thomas Howard and Sir Francis Vere, that of Gratiosa; to Lord Mountjoy and Sir Christopher Blount, St. Michael's; and Pitie, most fruitful in vines, was assigned to the Netherland squadron.

Before quitting Flores, Ralegh, with several

* Camden, p. 473.

companions, ventured to ramble into the island, enjoying probably the freshness and delicious change which that beautiful island, deriving its name from its flowers, afforded to the mind, after a long voyage on the inclement ocean. Whilst thus indulging, and availing himself of the opportunity of allowing his mariners to get supplies of water, Ralegh was hastily summoned to follow Essex to Fayall, whither that commander, impatient of delay, had sailed before this apprizal.

On their arrival at Fayall, they cast anchor near the principal town, Hocta, but nowhere descried Essex, or any part of his squadron. Delighted with the aspect and importance of the town, Ralegh called together a council of the officers, to determine whether they should attack it, or wait until the arrival of their chief. It was determined to delay proceedings for a few days, a plan which was pursued until the fourth day, when, Essex not appearing, Ralegh resolved to take in water, guarding his ships for that purpose, though without any expectation of annoyance from the enemy's forts. In this idea he was, however, mistaken; and, meeting with undoubted signs of resistance from the Spanish garrison, the high spirit of Ralegh, and the eagerness of his sailors, would not permit him to recede in his undertaking. With two hundred and sixty men, therefore, he resolved to attack a force double that number; and, placing his ord-

nance as near the shore as possible, he rowed into a species of harbour which was guarded by high rocks. In the course of this exploit, the courage of Ralegh's crew failing under a heavy fire, he reproached them in vehement language, ordering his own barge to be rowed down full upon the rocks, and bidding those who were not panic-struck to follow him. Upon this there was an instant revival of hope and of valour; and Ralegh, landing among fire and shot, was followed by many officers of distinction to the narrow entrance, having, as it seemed, about him a spell which secured him from danger and intimidated the enemy. The Spaniards, seeing his forces thicken, retreated to the woods; and Ralegh, recruited from the Netherland squadron, was soon able to prepare the town to receive Essex on his arrival.* On the following day that commander, who had been tracking the ocean in search of the Spanish fleet, came to Fayall. Sir Gilly Merrick, one of his creatures, who had opposed the storming of the town, represented to him that Ralegh had merely seized an opportunity of signalizing himself without the co-operation of his colleague. This account was eagerly received and believed by Essex, who had long suspected ill-will on the part of Ralegh towards himself; yet he disdained to take an ungenerous advantage of his authority to oppress

* Oldys, 117.

one so much his superior in age and experience. He rejected, therefore, the counsels of some of his officers to put Ralegh to death, and of others to cashier him; although the latter punishment was inflicted on some of his companions. Ralegh was, however, summoned to appear before the commander-in-chief, and severely reprimanded by him for having broken the discipline of war, and landed his troops without being authorized by the command of the general. This act of insubordination had, he observed, been forbidden under pain of death. To this address Ralegh replied by affirming, that the three principal commanders, of whom he was one, were exempted from this prohibition, which he had only been induced to infringe from the necessity of taking in water. He was then exhorted by Lord Thomas Howard to acknowledge his error, an injunction with which he complied; and after which, he, and the captains who had been cashiered, were received into favour.

Essex appeared to be so far reconciled to Ralegh, that he consented to rest in the temporary residence in which Ralegh had taken up his abode in the town. Ralegh also invited him to supper; a request with which Essex, who is said to have preferred the society and conversation of his rival to that of many others whom he appeared to favour, seemed evidently disposed to comply.

Upon being apprized of this arrangement, Sir Christopher Blount remarked, that "he thought my lord would not sup at all;" an observation which called forth from Ralegh the remark, that "as for Sir Christopher's own appetite, he might, when he was invited, disable it at pleasure; but if the Earl would stay, he should be glad of his company." * By the mediation of Lord Thomas Howard, who, in the most becoming manner, acted as umpire between them, the generous Essex and his comrade were, however, effectually reconciled for the present time, notwithstanding the endeavours of base spirits to sever them.

From Fayall, Essex and his squadron sailed for Gratiosa, which submitted itself to the English arms. On landing at this island the generous yet imprudent temper of Essex displayed itself, in his declining to face the enemy's forts with a greater proportion of arms and armour than the poor sailors who rowed his barge to shore †; and here he again experienced that ill fortune which his warm admirer Camden attributed to the evil influence of his horoscope, but which may here be ascribed to a deficiency in caution, and a too great facility in following the advice of others. For some reasons, of little moment, he tarried not long enough at Gratiosa to look out for the Spanish Fleet, generally returning at this season

* Oldys, 122. † Ibid.

from the Indies. He sailed to St. Michael's; and had the mortification of learning, that about an hour or two afterwards those very ships had touched at Gratiosa.*

After many vain attempts to return to Gratiosa, and to attack the enemy, the fleet set sail for England, meeting on their passage with heavy storms, which in the mean time annihilated a Spanish armament, which was in preparation to sail against England from the Ferrol; Heaven thus seeming to interpose its aid where the strength of man was ineffectual to destroy. By the total loss of the Spanish Fleet, a great slaughter between the two nations was thus prevented; and the English warriors, after some distress, came safely to their native shores. Ralegh was in great necessity for water, and, whilst suffering from that greatest of all deficiences, beheld the Earl of Essex at a distance, deprived in a recent storm of every companion vessel, except two little barks. This vicissitude to him who had but lately left England, followed by a numerous fleet, appeared to an eye-witness† almost typical of the varying destiny by which the eventful tenour of the Earl's life was, in no ordinary degree, chequered. On his return to the court, the impatient indignation of the Queen, and the murmurs of the people, awaited him; and Sir Francis Vere, formerly his

* Camden, p. 474.

† Sir Arthur Gorges. Oldys, 125.

warm partizan, and still attached to him, could with some difficulty assuage the anger of Elizabeth, balancing her interests as a sovereign with her private inclinations.

The Island-voyage, comprizing a scheme so admirably concerted, that it might have almost wholly annihilated the Spanish navy, was totally unsuccessful, as far as the public interests were concerned; some prizes were obtained by Ralegh, and much plunder by Essex†; yet the result of this expedition was injurious to the reputation of each of these gallant commanders. The people were unanimous in their censures of Ralegh, whose usual unpopularity was increased by the circumstance of his variance with Essex, although his exploits were generally more commended than those of the Earl. Essex, on the other hand, the idol of the lower classes, was blamed by intelligent persons for his violence and rashness, and was thought to have acted with injustice towards Ralegh, in exposing so experienced and approved a navigator to public inquiry into his conduct.‡ Confidence between these two individuals had long been suspended by a very slender thread of regard: it had been shaken in the Cadiz expedition, in which Ralegh felt that he had been

* Note from Vere's Commentaries in Biog.

† Camden, p. 475.

‡ Sydney Papers, vol. ii. p. 68. 74.

unduly kept back from services of distinction; and the events of the recent enterprize had confirmed these impressions. This state of feeling between the two parties was discreditable to both, and to Essex fatally injurious. On his part, this rivalship was maintained with a spirit of honour, which was nobly displayed in the affair of Flores, when asked to put Ralegh upon his trial: "That," he replied, "would I do, were he my friend." But Ralegh possessed not a disposition so generous as that of his unfortunate enemy; and aided by others more subtle than himself, if he did not accelerate the ruin of the imprudent Essex, he lent no benevolent aid to arrest the progress of his destruction. Whilst distrust on the one hand, and dislike on the other, rankled in the minds of both parties, a close observer of each individual gave this account of the deportment of Sir Walter towards the Earl:—"Sir Walter Ralegh's carriage to my Lord of Essex, is with the cunningest respect, and deepest humility, that ever I saw or have trowed."*

But no machinations on the part of Ralegh, could have ruined Essex had he retained the friendship of the Lord Treasurer Burleigh, the guardian and adviser of his youth. This veteran statesman, who is said to have controuled the court

* Cayley, p. 283., from Birch's Memoirs of Queen Elizabeth, vol. ii. p. 10.

at pleasure for thirty years, was now in the decline of life, but in the full vigour of his faculties, and in the height of his influence. Designated by Queen Elizabeth with the name of "her spirit," from the celerity with which he despatched public business, Burleigh was unable to allot any portion of his time to his own private recreations; serving a mistress, who was scarcely induced by any apology less than a last illness to give up the closest attendance on the part of her ministers, and executing her commands with a degree of zeal and regularity proportionate to the demands made upon those requisite qualities. Yet, whilst permitting himself only one indulgence, that of building great houses, which he called "his vanity," the lord treasurer had found leisure carefully to superintend the education of Essex, and even to write him counsels concerning the nature of true nobility, to which there is a Latin reply extant, from the Earl, showing how well he had profited by the care of his guardian.* Notwithstanding these early obligations, dissensions and jealousies had arisen between both the Cecils and Lord Essex, Ralegh acting a conspicuous part in the management of that machinery of which these court cabals were composed.

It had been the lot of Burleigh, to live to see his children's children to the third generation.†

* Ellis's Original Letters, vol. ii. p. 77. and 181.

† Ellis, 2d series, vol. iii. p. 190.

It was his still happier fate to behold those children not only walking in the shadow of his greatness, but pursuing the same course which had raised him to eminence. Of his two sons, the elder succeeded him in his title and estates; the younger, bred up to business, inherited his application, his integrity, and, in some measure, his talents, but he displayed not that scope of mind which had enabled the elder Burleigh to comprehend the true interests of his nation, to extend the views of Elizabeth, and to direct them to useful and glorious ends.

Robert Cecil, afterwards the first Peer created by Elizabeth's successor, was, at this period of Ralegh's life, his close ally; and, with some variations, the opponent, and, as Essex conceived, the rival of that impetuous earl. The original cause of this aversion on the part of Essex, was his disgust at what he considered to be the low and dishonourable machinations of Cecil, who has been aptly described as a courtier from the cradle. The immediate source of their mutual ill-will was the appointment of Sir Robert Cecil to the office of secretary of state, during the absence of Essex at Cadiz. Previous to his departure, the earl had entreated the queen to bestow that place upon Sir Thomas Bodley, recently ambassador at the Hague, and the munificent founder of that library which bears his name at Oxford; a fabric which drew

from the pedantic James the First the exclamation, that, "were he not a king, he would be a University man; were he a prisoner, he would wish no other prison than that library, and to be chained together with so many good authors." But Bodley, although an eminent man, and one of a family who had suffered greatly for the Protestant cause, was judged by the queen to be less adapted for the management of affairs than Cecil, who had imbibed notions of state policy in his very infancy. Elizabeth was, also, disgusted by the extravagant invectives of Essex against Cecil, and by his ill-timed and ill-judging panegyric of his friend. The place was, accordingly, bestowed upon Cecil.*

During the interval which elapsed between the expedition to Cadiz and the Island Voyage, Ralegh, from what motive does not appear, endeavoured to tranquillize the frequent dissensions which arose between the belligerent factions; and, on one occasion, prevailed so far as to bring them together at the house of the secretary, where they all three dined.† For the diligence with which Ralegh pursued this endeavour at reconciliation, various reasons were assigned by the watchful observers about the court, who appear, from the documents extant,

* Camden, 1596.

† Rowland White's Letters in Sydney Papers, vol. ii. p. 37—44.

to have made the office of investigating into the concerns of others the business of their lives. By some it was thought, that Ralegh wished to avail himself of the joint interest of Cecil and Essex, in order to obtain the post of vice-chamberlain, for which he applied; and this conjecture seems probable, from the circumstance that he proffered to Essex a third part of the profits derived from prizes in the Island-voyage, to assist in the payment of the earl's debts, for the important consideration of his influence. Whatever may have been the immediate spring of his actions, these debasing intrigues had their effect in sullying the purity of Ralegh's integrity, and in subjecting his fine genius to the profanation of selfishness and duplicity. It is a matter of speculation, whether continued manœuvres, and the habit of deception, are not calculated to debase and weaken the mind more than the commission of one actual crime; for we are reluctant to allow the necessity of repentance for a series of daily, and apparently trifling faults, and are, therefore, led on to a dangerous repetition. Meanwhile, Ralegh was assiduous in courting the friendship of the Lord Treasurer Burleigh, not merely from regard for the virtues, or respect for the talents, of that great man, but from the pitiful desire that something might be effected in his favour before Sir Robert Cecil went to France, as an ambassador to Henry the Fourth. It was, indeed, at the time reported,

that both Ralegh and the younger Cecil ardently desired to be made Barons, and had, says Rowland White, "a purpose to be called unto it, although there be no parliament." * Accordingly, with the dreams of greatness in his head, Ralegh attended the great man to Dover, entertained him with a banquet and a play, and devoted to him those attentions which ambition offers as a tribute to success. The result of all these manœuvres was of a mingled nature. The office of vice-chamberlain had been promised to Sir Robert Sidney, and was probably never thought of for Ralegh; Queen Elizabeth not liking men who were fit for military exploits, to be, in her own language, "too much addicted to the presence-chamber." † For this disappointment, Ralegh obtained, through the interest of Cecil, and the concession of Essex, the honour of becoming a privy councillor. ‡

Whilst we deprecate servility and intrigue, it must be remembered, that there were some parts of Ralegh's conduct, as a courtier, more creditable to his character than the furtherance of his own selfish designs. With his usual wisdom, he saw that the frequent broils between the courtiers impeded the due performance of public

* Sydney Papers, vol. ii. p. 126.

† Ibid. p. 21. — An observation which she afterwards applied to this very Sir Robert Sidney.

‡ Camden, p. 476.

business; occasioned, to use his own words, "continual unquietness" in the mind of the Queen; and tended to give an advantage to the enemies of the sovereign. Impressed by these considerations, Ralegh sought, and procured, a reconciliation between Essex and Lord Howard, recently created Earl of Nottingham, upon the score of his services in the Spanish invasion, and at Cadiz. Essex had resented the elevation of Lord Howard to the title of earl, which, added to his office of lord chamberlain, gave him precedency. But Elizabeth soothed the vanity of her favourite, by bestowing upon him the dignity of lord marshal, which, by a statute of the reign of Henry the Eighth, enabled all of the rank of earl who had that dignity to take precedency before their peers of the same degree. *

1597. Ralegh was now again actively engaged in the military services of his country. Reports which prevailed respecting the approach of a Spanish fleet again drew him into Cornwall, to assist in the preparations of defence in that county.—Shortly afterwards he was ordered by the privy council to give his opinion of the affairs of Ireland, and some rumours prevailed of his being appointed lord deputy in that country; but, to the acceptance of this office, Ralegh, who had early witnessed its dangers and anxieties, expressed a decided reluctance.

* Camden.

Ireland afforded at this time almost the only chance of mingling in those warlike occupations, in which Englishmen were indulged by their monarchs of the Tudor line. Already had negotiations for a peace with Spain been laid before Henry the Fourth of France, and proposed, by that monarch, to Elizabeth. The lord treasurer, almost expiring with age and infirmities, seconded the proposition, upon reasons connected with his intimate knowledge of the resources of England; his observation of the temper of the people, prone to sedition when heavily burdened; and his fears of the uncertainties of war.* Of the sentiments entertained by Ralegh on this discussion we have no memorial; but it is probable that he coincided with Burleigh. The popular faction, headed by Essex, and emboldened by the manifest inclinations of the queen, lifted up their voices for a continuance of the struggle which had, already, proved so triumphant. Essex, who, like most of the highly-born men of the day, deemed no pursuit in life glorious but that of war, breathed, as Burleigh expressed it, nothing but "war, slaughter, and blood." After a vehement dispute upon the subject, that veteran statesman, become almost prophetic from experience, gave his sentiments to Essex in a manner which might have silenced a less impetuous reasoner. "I know not," says Camden, speaking of this argument between

* Camden, p. 492.

Cecil and Essex, "with what presaging mind he (Lord Burleigh) reached forth a psalm-book, and silently pointed to this verse: 'Men of blood shall not live out half their days.'" Perhaps, that veteran observer of life and manners saw that the generous but impetuous spirit of Essex would ultimately effect his destruction: perhaps he reviewed the picture, doubtless often, in the course of his long life, presented to his observation, of feminine devotedness changing its nature, like chemical substances, from sweet to bitter, from the admixture of the pungent ingredients of suspicion and jealousy. But Essex was destined soon to lose this stern monitor yet faithful friend; Lord Burleigh dying this year, worn out with the gout, and still more with the labours and anxieties of a public career, and, as his son the Earl of Salisbury, likewise, afterwards in his own case expressed himself, longing for death. Whilst Burleigh lived, the life of Essex would have been secure from the scaffold, even if his indiscretion had ruined his prospects as a courtier. Queen Elizabeth, disturbed by the frequent contentions of her courtiers, and still more by the alternate insolence and submission of Essex, may perhaps almost have envied the tranquil end of her dying minister, whom she frequently visited after his retirement from office. Having arranged every temporal concern which might draw him back to life, Burleigh eagerly

courted the approach of his dissolution; and, "perceiving," as an eye-witness expresses it, "that his vital spirits wrestled with the power of death," cried out in agony, "'Oh, what a heart have I that I will not die!' and when his breath was almost spent, and, by infusion of hot waters into his mouth, he had recovered sense again, he gently reproved those that were about him, saying they did him wrong to call him back." Thus, with the last faltering motions of his lips employed in prayers and exhortations, died this truly great man*, whose bitterest adversary, as Camden affirms, "said that he envied him in nothing so much as for such a death in so great glorie." With Burleigh, the small portion of prudence which Essex possessed died also; and as for Elizabeth, her support in difficulties, and her counsellor in peace, was gone. To the friends of Essex his death seemed, in regard to the earl, as the harbinger of that ruin which follows in the train of thoughtless and confident security. Such was the dread which he entertained respecting his contest with Ralegh, that Puckering, the lord keeper, prevailed upon him to give his promise, that no further rivalship should be displayed between them: yet this timely caution availed but little. One of the last festivities of Elizabeth's reign

* Ellis, iii. note, p. 189.

which she may be said to have enjoyed, gave rise, however, to fresh contentions. On the celebration of the queen's birth-day, Ralegh appeared in the tilt-yard at Westminster, with a degree of splendour which roused the jealousy of Essex, and stimulated him, as it is said, to aim at the deadly injury of the knight in the usual combats. Ralegh possessed a suit of armour so costly as to excite the envy of all those who wearied themselves in a vain show, or were the slaves of that "vexation of spirit" which has wittily been described as the successor of vanity. In this gorgeous encasement Ralegh so much delighted, that his portrait was painted while wearing it; and he is supposed to have figured in it on this occasion, for, in the portrait, his arm was decorated with a riband which tradition asserts he received from the queen as a reward in this very tilt-yard, and which he carried to her majesty one morning, to show that he had ridden a hundred and twenty miles the night before, in order to return to her presence.* The shoes of this accomplished courtier were valued at six thousand pieces of gold; his sword and belt were adorned with jewels; and about his person he wore jewels to the value of three-score thousand pounds, one diamond alone being worth a hundred pounds.† Yet Ralegh, now in the forty-seventh year of his age, and disfigured, according

* Oldys, p. 145. † Ibid.

to his own account, with a "lame leg, and deformed," could not, in all this splendour of appearance, cope with the gay and gallant bearing of Essex, whose very foibles were of a description to sort with the turbulence and mimic wars of a tournament. That which in Ralegh was design, appeared in Essex the overflowings of an ardent and valiant heart, sacrificing, at the shrine of the queen's vanity, the tribute which the young and beautiful might envy. Nothing, however, could be more childish than the mode in which their rivalry was carried on, as the well-known story of the tawny feathers sufficiently exemplifies. Whilst Essex was in disgrace with the queen, after the celebrated interview in which he, with more natural feeling than gallantry, resented the royal blow on the ear, so renowned in all the annals of those times, he learned that Ralegh intended to appear on the following day in the tilt-yard with a gallant train, all splendidly accoutred in orange-coloured feathers. Upon gaining this intelligence, Essex mustered a far more numerous company, all of whom he adorned with feathers similar to those worn by the Ralegh party; and so lavish was he of these ensigns, that he caused two thousand of them to be worn in the tilt-yard.* He then appeared as the leader of this radiant

* Clarendon's Disparity between Essex and Bucks. Reliquiæ Wottoniæ, p. 180.

band, himself in a complete suit of orange colour, and thus, being mistaken as the chief of the whole of those in orange, confounded all distinction between himself and Ralegh. This "feather triumph," as Lord Clarendon calls it, affords a specimen of the taste in which civil contentions were carried on during the strange alternations of frivolity and wisdom by which Elizabeth's reign was characterized. Yet the victory of Essex in this petty contest was incomplete; and on the following day a knight being observed in green in lieu of him who had figured in orange, it was remarked, that "he had changed his colour, because he had run so ill." This disguised and disgraced knight is conjectured to have been Essex.*

1598. The disturbances in Ireland recalled the attention of the military portion of Elizabeth's court to affairs of serious moment, and consultations began to be held as to the person most adapted to quell the furious rebellions by which that unhappy country was agitated. Of Elizabeth it has been said, and the common popular feeling of the time confirmed the observation, "that her dispensations were so poised as though justice and discretion had both stood at the beam, and seen them weighed together in due proportion†;" yet her choice on this

* Oldys, 132.

† Naunton's Fragmenta Regalia.

occasion implied a total absence of those principles of action. That Ralegh was the most effective man of the court, in operations of difficulty or in deeds of danger, appears to have been the prevailing opinion; each power of his mind having been tried by the severe test of experience, and improved by the habit of constant exertion; a habit by the aid of which ordinary abilities often resemble in their effects the most remarkable indications of genius: but Ralegh's distaste for the arduous office of lord deputy, accounts in some measure for his not being appointed to that important trust.

The next person upon whom the public eye rested was Charles Blount*, who had succeeded, in 1594, to his brother's title of Lord Mountjoy, and of whom the queen prophesied, that "he would end her troubles in Ireland;" a national benefit which he partly accomplished in her reign, and effectually in that of her successor. Descended from an ancient race, and allied to three families of peers, Lord Mountjoy had been distinguished from his earliest introduction by the peculiar favour of the queen. At first his youthful and handsome appearance engaged the attention of Elizabeth, who said, "she knew there was some noble blood in him." The bashfulness with

* Blount, a name originally Norman, deriving it from Le Blound, or modern Le Blond; this family being remarked for their yellow hair. Brit. Biog. from Camden.

which he, a youth of twenty, sustained the unfeminine rudeness with which she fixed her dauntless gaze upon him, was found to conceal the attributes both of wit and courage, and the acquisition of scholastic learning.* Hence he had been employed in most of the military enterprizes of his time, varying occasionally the distinctions of warlike prowess with those accorded in the academic retirements of Oxford, being created a master of arts in that university almost whilst actively engaged in pursuit of the Armada.† Thus endowed, and possessed of the entire confidence of the queen, the expectations of the political part of the nation were in favour of Mountjoy's nomination to the government of Ireland. Unhappily for Essex, his own presumption, and the intrigues of his enemies, who desired his absence from the court, intimidated Mountjoy from advancing those pretensions to the appointment which would have been seconded by the universal suffrage of public opinion.

Reckless of his own inability to conduct the affairs of the sister kingdom, the infatuated Essex interposed his plea to the charge, which he grounded upon the inexperience of Blount in warlike affairs, and the smallness of his estate; alleging that he was strengthened with few followers, and too much drowned in the study of

* Naunton, xii. p. 73. † Biog.

learning. Although pretending, after the fashion of the day, to disqualify himself, as it was called, for the office, unfortunately for himself the Earl gained the object of his wishes, and left England, confident of victory over the rebels. "I have beaten Ralegh and Knollys in the council," such was his boast, "and I will beat Tir Owen in the field; for nothing worthy her majesty's honour has yet been achieved."* The result of these sanguine expectations, and of the operations of the largest army that Ireland had ever seen; the neglect of instructions which he had received; and the ill-advised return of Essex, might have effected his ruin, independent of the evil offices of his enemies. Ireland was justly said to have been "the sepulchre of his father, and the grave of his own fortunes."† Yet Essex with common prudence might have retrieved his condition, possessing as he did an interest in the affections of the queen, from which even all his ingratitude and his follies could not wean her.

Nevertheless, even before his return to England, his friends dreaded, and he meditated, the prosecution of some audacious scheme which might involve the succession to the crown in difficulty, and the Queen herself in danger.‡ Such were the rumours of his rash designs,

* Nugæ Antiquæ, vol. i. p. 246.
† Parallel in Reliquiæ Wottoniæ.
‡ Camden, anno 1599.

that the last maritime military service in which Ralegh was employed by Elizabeth was thought to refer to an apprehension of his treasonable attempt. In the month of August there were great and general fears of an invasion from some quarter; troops to the number of six thousand were mustered to guard the city and attend the Queen's person; chains were drawn across the streets; additional watches were provided, and lights hung out from every house for a fortnight. * Sixteen or eighteen vessels were hastily fitted out, Lord Thomas Howard, and Ralegh as vice-admiral, being appointed to command them. On the fifth day of the month Ralegh took leave of the ladies of the court and of his friends, and joined the fleet. † After being a month at sea, he was permitted, with the rest of the armament, to return home. The popular surmise which attributed this preparation to a dread of Essex was, however, in all possibility, deceived. It was the Queen's policy, admirable in times of so much danger, to accustom her people to prompt and sudden motions of defence; to alarm her enemies as much by her readiness to repel as by her deeds in actual warfare; fulfilling thus the duties of a legislator, whose truest interest it is to prevent bloodshed and promote in her subjects the happy feeling of security.

* Oldys, 133. from Stowe's Annals.

† Sydney Papers, p. 117.

Upon the unexpected return of Essex in September, cabals ran high, and the anxiety and perturbation experienced by those persons who were most interested could only be exceeded by the chagrin and irresolution of the Queen.

When Essex was consigned to custody, popular clamours were more virulent than court factions, and even the pulpit lent its aid to fan the flames of dissension. Extravagant praises of the earl were uttered by the preachers, and libels were propagated throughout the country, reflecting on the privy council and on the Queen for detaining in durance him whom they considered to be innocent. * Of these domestic broils, a narrative, perhaps the most minute that ever was penned, is preserved in the letters of Rowland White to his patron Sir Robert Sydney, recently promoted to the honour of chamberlain. † In the details given by this industrious observer of men and manners, the alternations of hope and fear, both in the friends and enemies of Essex; the irresolution of the Queen's mind; the strength of her affection, counteracted by her jealous concern for the safety of her crown and sceptre; all are pourtrayed so as to present these vicissitudes of passion before us in lively colours. In respect to the libels, this writer asserts Sir

* Camden, p. 571.

† Published by Arthur Collins, Esq., in the Sydney Papers.

Walter Ralegh to have been regarded as the author. After observing, "that between Lord Cobham and Sir Walter Rauley is growen a deepe unkindness, but that he cannot yet learne the cause," he adds, "Sir Walter Rauley has an ague: all the world suspects him about the libels." * The design of these publications must, therefore, have been to inflame the mind of the Queen against Essex, since the mutual aversion of the Earl and Ralegh was well known to all parties at this time. "Some shynynge of pace and pitye appears in her majesty towards Essex, for besides her yesterday's favour she is pleased he shall have the liberty of the garden; but Sir Walter Rauley † is fallen sicke upon it, and her majesty very graciously sent to see him." ‡ The libels were inveighed against by Lord Treasurer Buckhurst in the council, and the wisdom of the Queen's measures defended by her ministers severally. This was followed by an harangue on the part of the lord keeper in the star chamber, exposing the errors of the Earl of Essex, and magnifying the endeavours of the Queen to secure the peace of Ireland. § Whilst Essex remained in custody in the house of the lord

* Sydney Papers, p. 141.

† His name is written in ciphers, 24 being the number assigned to him in these documents.

‡ Sydney Papers, p. 139.

§ Camden, p. 571.

keeper, devoting, as he wrote to his friends, his "meditations to God *," Ralegh was sent into Flanders with Lord Cobham, with a commission to treat with the United States concerning the peace now in agitation between England and the Continental powers. † Their embassy was conducted with the greatest secresy; yet it excited suspicions in the mind of the Archduke Albert, Governor of the Netherlands in right of his wife, to whom that portion of his dominions had been ceded by her father, Philip the Second of Spain. Queen Elizabeth having been charged by Albert with supplying the Hollanders with ammunition and victuals, it was thought necessary to empower the commissioners for peace at Boulogne to refute this notion, and accordingly an ingenious and subtle excuse for the embassy was supplied by the able pen of the secretary Cecil, in case that the journey of Lord Cobham and Ralegh should be mentioned as a source of umbrage. Prince Maurice was at this time engaged in the siege of Isabella, a fort near Ostend, and the pretext of seeing his camp, and the arrangement of his army was the plea upon which the journey of the two English courtiers was laid: "of whom, if they speak (but not otherwise)," says the cautious Cecil, "you may use this argument: 'that they have no charge, nor carried either horse or man but

* Camden, p. 571. † Oldys, p. 134.

some half a dozen of their owne; but finding the Queen is so resolved to have peace (if good conditions could be had), they obtained leave with importunitie to see this one action before they should become desperate of seeing any more of that kynde in her majesty's time,' which God long continue." * The postscript of this letter, which is dated July 14th, 1600, mentions the return of Cobham and Ralegh, adding these words, "so as that matter will be quickly answered." Their mission nevertheless appears to have excited some surmise and alarm among the commissioners at Boulogne †, and it was afterwards found to be not "altogether idle, nor upon curiosity only; but that they carried some message which did no harm." ‡

1600. On the return of Ralegh to the English court, he found his credit good with the Queen, and soon received a substantial proof of her favour. § One great object of his desires was the situation of Governor of Jersey, a post which had recently become vacant by the death of Sir Anthony Paulet. In his solicitations for this office, Ralegh was opposed by Sir William Russell, to whom he offered to give up the warden-

* Letter of Cecil to the Commissioners for the Treaty of Bulloigne.

† Ibid. p. 130. ‡ Ibid. p. 131.

§ Sydney Papers, vol. ii. p. 212.

‖ Winwood's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 215.

ship of the stannaries and lieutenantcy of Cornwall, to induce him to relinquish his suit. Ralegh gained the appointment, however, with a grant of the manor or lordship of St. Germain in Jersey, without these sacrifices; but 300*l.* a year was deducted from the usual revenues, Lord Henry Seymour claiming that sum as a regular grant from the Queen during the life of the former governor. A commission was sent to survey the Island and to estimate the expense of building a new fort*, which it was thought Sir Walter would consent to erect at his own charge. This appointment was one of considerable trust and importance. Ralegh, as it appears from his trial, did not subsequently escape suspicion from the nature of a situation in which intrigues might easily be carried on with foreign courts†; but the strict confidence placed in him by the discerning Elizabeth may be implied from this appointment. Vigilance, next to fidelity, was the quality which the Queen most highly prized in Ralegh, and with which she seldom or never dispensed. To him she could not in justice apply her favourite saying, that "state officers were like garments, which at the first, putting on were strait, but by and by did wear loose enough‡;" since whatever may have been his faults, his alacrity, zeal, and

* Sydney Papers, vol. ii. p. 210—212.

† See Trial, in Oldys.

‡ Bacon's Apophthegms, p. 332.

disinterestedness in the conduct of his public employments, was never even by his enemies made the subject of doubt or invective. *

Whilst Ralegh was thus reaping the reward of long and laborious exertions, we find him able to snatch a few intervals from the perpetual services of a courtier's life to devote to retirement, or at least to relaxation, in his country seat at Sherborne, in Devonshire. When disappointment assailed him in his worldly career, he passed to this beloved retreat, whither he had secluded himself early in the year, when the Queen, either influenced by others, or with feminine inconsistency, had refused to the man whom she placed as governor over an important Island, the office of commissioner for the treaty of peace at Boulogne. Dejected, and probably disgusted, Ralegh took refuge from the harassing cares of ambition in the bosom of his family; a retreat which no man of virtue and intelligence will ever repent of adopting as a resource, if he have modelled that family with good sense, elevated by principles of religion. In his first journey to his native country during this year, Ralegh carried down with him the son of secretary Cecil, a youth of great promise, to reside as an inmate †; probably for the purpose of receiving a similar course of instruction with the young Walter Ralegh. On their road they rested and dined at Sion House,

* Oldys, p. 146.

† Sydney Papers, vol. ii. p. 159.

the seat of the Earl of Northumberland; and in Devonshire Sir Walter on this occasion remained more than five months. In September he received as a guest the secretary Cecil, who, to use expressions which well denote the cares of a statesman's life, "had picked out this time to be away, and to take some time to be abroad from the infinite time and pains he takes in the despatch of her majesty's service when he is in court." * Cobham, whose selfish, base, and weak character was either not at this time unfolded to Ralegh, or was overlooked by him from motives of interest, was also among the visitants at Sherborne, and, as is shewn by one of Ralegh's familiar letters to him, upon the most intimate terms.† The repose which Ralegh may be presumed to have enjoyed in domestic society was not of long continuance, circumstances unhappily arising which not only for a time destroyed his tranquillity, but which have left, with no faint traces, in the opinion of many authors, stains of an indelible character upon his memory.

The Earl of Essex had been imprisoned during six months, a period in which the agitations of the Queen's mind were unparalleled by any previous excess of passion, however momentous the circumstances of her life on sundry occasions had proved. The tragical close of the Earl's career, afterwards cut short by her

* Sydney Papers, p. 210---212. † See Appendix.

sovereign power, might even justify the sympathy of one, who had loved him less fondly and less foolishly than his royal mistress. Already had she spared him the ignominy of a star chamber trial for treason, suffering him to be summoned before a private tribunal in the house of the lord keeper; a grace for which Essex, on his trial, thanked God Almighty, applying to his "most gracious princess" the warmest epithets of mercy, "that she had suffered this cup to pass." * Such was the language of the day, and such the adulations of the times, that the relentings of earthly resentments were, with a grossness of feeling little short of profanity, confounded with the benignant and long-suffering compassion of the Supreme Being.

Lord Clarendon, who displays in this observation an intimate knowledge of the female heart, remarks, "that if ever that uncouth speech fell "from Essex of the Queen, which is delivered to "us by one who is much conversant in the affairs "of the court, that she was as crooked in her dis-"position as in her carcase, all my wonder at his "destruction is taken from me." † It is, indeed, too true, not in relation to this speech of the Earl's, but with regard to his whole conduct, that he was sufficiently his own enemy not to render it necessary even to inquire by what

* Camden, p. 530.

† Parallel in Reliquiæ Wottoniæ.

instruments of malice his ruin was effected. In one of his acts of imprudence, he inflicted, however, upon Ralegh, an injury, which, if Sir Walter had any considerable share in his condemnation, proved, eventually, the cause of a heavy retribution. After some alternations of repentance and of violence, Essex entered into a correspondence with James the Sixth, King of Scotland, and failed not to impress him with formidable notions of Ralegh's power and influence, and with most pernicious ones of his designing temper. Nothing could be more indiscreet than this act, and nothing more certain to irritate the Queen, than to pay any deference to James in anticipation of his succession. Even to name that event in her presence, was, as she was wont to say, "to pin up her winding-sheet before her face." * It was, however, a measure both rash in Essex, and fatal to any chance of estimation towards Ralegh, in the favour of James I.

Well might Elizabeth declare "that her father would not have endured such perverseness" as that which Essex, the honoured object of her affections, displayed. But notwithstanding her devotion to him, prudence, and perhaps avarice, induced her to refuse the renewal of his farm of *sweet* wines (a term applied to all but French and Rhenish wines), the lease of which was

* Nugæ Antiquæ, vol. ii. p. 257.

† Camden, p. 533.

nearly expired. Upon this denial, Essex, whose debts had been, at an early period of his life, considerable, rushed into the vortex prepared for him by false advisers, and rendered fatal by the violence of his own passions. The result was long remembered with pain, by those who admired his virtues and compassionated his errors; it was viewed with indignation by all who were justly scandalized at the ingratitude and perfidy of Essex to his sovereign, now in the decline of life, and erring only towards him hitherto in a blind partiality. On the evening of the 7th of February 1601, messengers were despatched from Essex House about the town, to raise reports that Cobham and Ralegh lay in wait for the Earl's life. Meanwhile Essex had formed a plot to enter the city on the following morning, which was Sunday, and to present himself to the aldermen and the people, craving their aid against his enemies, and their present help in assisting him to make his way to the Queen's presence.* On that very morning, Sir Ferdinand Gorges, one of the Earl's adherents, received a message from Ralegh, urging him to come with all possible speed to Durham House, and by water, as being the most private way. This intimation was mentioned by Gorges to Essex, who consented to his hastening to the interview, but directed him to meet Ralegh on

* Ibid. p. 538.

the water, on no account to land at Durham House, and to take a guard with him in order to secure his return. * The object of this conference was a kind endeavour to save from inevitable destruction an old companion in battle, Sir Ferdinand having been with him at the siege of Cadiz, of which he wrote a relation highly creditable to Ralegh. According to the testimony of Gorges, Ralegh came to the interview alone, whilst Gorges was attended by two gentlemen. On their meeting, Ralegh told Gorges that he had sent for him to admonish him to make all haste out of town down to his charge†, there being a warrant out for sending him to the Fleet. For this kind advertisement, Gorges gave him thanks, but told him that the present occasion would soon discover itself; that it came too late, for that he had engaged himself in another matter. Ralegh further inquiring of him what it was, Gorges told him that "there were two thousand gentlemen who had resolved that day to die, or live free men." Ralegh protested that he had never heard of the plot until that morning, observing, that he did not know what they were to do against the Queen's authority; to which Gorges replied, "that it was by the abuse of him and others which made so many honest men resolve to seek

* Oldys, p. 136.

† The Government of Plymouth.

a reformation." The natural and temperate answer which Ralegh made to this avowal, was, that "no man is without a colour to his intent:" upon which, after some protestations of loyalty on the part of Gorges, they separated, Ralegh returning home, and Gorges to Essex House.*

Meanwhile the Earls of Rutland and Southampton, the Lord Sands, Lord Parker, Lord Monteagle, and about three hundred disaffected gentlemen had assembled around the Earl of Essex, whose house was sedulously guarded by his own orders from intruders. To some of his infatuated party, Essex, who, perhaps, scarcely knew his own intentions, declared his resolution to go to the Queen, and inform her of the snares laid for his life: and to others, he protested, that, with the help of the city of London, he would revenge the injuries done by his adversaries. Elizabeth, apprised of these rash proceedings, had lost no time in enjoining the mayor and citizens to be upon their guard, and to do their duty. To Essex she sent a deputation of four privy councillors, headed by the lord keeper and the lord chief justice, to inquire the cause of these disturbances. These persons were with difficulty allowed entrance, and all their servants were excluded. They found the Earl in the court-yard, in the midst of a confused

* Oldys, p. 136.

multitude; but their presence on this occasion appeared only to irritate his passions and to incense the misguided persons around him.* Stimulated by their outcries, Essex consented that the deputation should be taken into custody, and in this perilous situation he left them, consigning the defence of his house to Sir Gilly Merrick, and issuing from it, to pursue his first project of raising the city. Few instances are to be found in history, of a life more needlessly cast away by folly and insane violence than that of Essex. When, on sallying into the streets, he perceived the citizens uniformly tranquil, and refusing, with one accord, to take up arms, to which, at that period, all classes of men were regularly trained, he yet pursued his course to the sheriff's house, although much agitated by perplexity, and overcome with fatigue.

It was now that Thomas Lord Burleigh, the brother of Cecil, and the Garter King at Arms, entering the city, proclaimed Essex a traitor. It was at the same time announced, that the Lord Admiral was approaching with a vast body of men. Upon this intelligence, the hopes of the unfortunate Essex expired within him. He prepared, therefore, to return to his house; he revolved in his mind the expediency of conciliating the Queen by the release of her

* Camden, p. 589.

counsellors; and Gorges, who had been stopped by the Queen's troops at Ludgate, was fortunate enough to obtain permission to perform that prudent, but tardy act.

Essex now resolved to hasten home, a determination in which he was checked near the west gate of St. Paul's church, by a chain, defended with pikes and shot. This precaution had been devised by the Bishop of London, and Sir John Levison. And now Essex first drew his sword, and after seeing a young and beloved friend killed by his side, and having his own hat shot through, he was compelled to turn aside to Queen Hythe, with a few devoted followers. Hence they took boats, and arrived at Essex House.*

Of this eventful day, Ralegh was, doubtless, a busy witness; his post, as captain of the Queen's guard, requiring his personal attendance in scenes of such immediate danger. He was not, however, brought into contact with the Earl, nor with any of his accomplices; nor was it until Essex was obliged to take refuge in his own house, that Ralegh's services were required near that erring, and ill-fated nobleman. The last act of madness committed by the Earl on this memorable day, was the fortifying of his house. He first cast papers into the fire, lest, as he said, they should

* Camden, p. 451.

tell tales." He was buoyed up with expectations of relief from the citizens, until the Lord Admiral, his former associate at Cadiz, besieged his house: among the officers who were employed in this melancholy and unpopular service was Ralegh.* The building was carefully barricadoed on all sides; and the Lord Admiral, with his son, Lord Effingham, with Lord Cobham, Sir John Stanhope, Sir Robert Sidney, and Sir Fulk Grevil, planted themselves on the Thames side, in the garden; whilst an adequate force, headed by several noblemen, guarded the house, near the town. The particular post assigned to Ralegh has not been specified.

It was ten o'clock before Essex was prevailed on to surrender; and in a gloomy night he was conveyed to Lambeth Palace, London Bridge being impassable by water; but, on the following day, the Earl and his associates were carried in boats to the Tower; an abode from which few, in the reign of the Tudors, were emancipated, except to meet with that final doom which gives liberty and repose to the innocent.

And now the trial of Ralegh's forbearance, and the test of his generosity and elevation of mind, began. It was understood, even by the adherents of Essex, that "Sir Walter Ralegh might get himself eternal honour and love, more

* Oldys, p. 136.

than ever he could otherwise, if he would procure her Majesty's warrant to free the lords, which he might compass, by undertaking it in person." * Yet we hear of no attempt of this charitable nature, on the part of Ralegh, who would surely have avowed it at his own death, when he touched, in self-justification, upon the popular charges made against him of malignity towards Essex. For omissions of a virtuous act no public man, in those days of peril, could, however, with propriety, be censured. Every favoured courtier had his foes, who might give an invidious colouring to any behest, however innocent. Elizabeth was arbitrary, almost despotic; and, in her seasons of irritation, neutrality was the only safe course. "Blessed are they," said an eye-witness of her court, "that can be away, and live contented." † Such, probably, was the pervading sentiment of all who viewed closely the cares and heart-rending vicissitudes of that chequered scene.

If, however, Ralegh had the moderation to preserve in his conduct, towards Essex, an honourable neutrality, it was more than the world believed. The spirit of the age permitted, on all public occasions where party feeling was engaged on the side of power, a vehemence of

* Oldys, p. 137.

† Letter of Rowland White in Sydney Papers, vol. ii. p. 126.

invective against a delinquent, and a violence of proceeding which would now be regarded with disgust, and repaid with shame. The truth of this observation was fully experienced by Ralegh at a subsequent period of his life; and if he, by any secret machinations, aggravated the misfortunes of Essex, he was severely but justly punished in the events of his own ruin.

On the nineteenth day of the month, Essex and Southampton were arraigned in Westminster Hall, the lord treasurer Buckhurst acting as lord steward on the occasion. The Queen's sergeant-at-law, Yelverton, in an opening speech, compared Essex to Catiline, and made a similitude between the Earl's ambition and the growth of the crocodile, which ceaseth not "as long as he liveth."* Coke, the Queen's attorney, followed on the same side, too well adapted for the office of adding abuse to proof, by a nature as inflexible and unrelenting to the unfortunate, as it was subservient and cringing to the powerful and prosperous. He concluded an enumeration of the Queen's benefits to Essex, by wishing that "this Robert might be the last of this name Earl of Essex, who affected to be Robert first of that name, King of England."

To these harangues, Essex, with a cheerful voice, and composed manner, replied, by asserting his innocence of any other intention than

* Camden, p. 543.

that of prostrating himself at the feet of the Queen, and declaring to her the dangers which threatened his country. He protested that his fidelity to his sovereign and to his country was untainted.*

Ralegh, with forty of the Queen's guard, was present during the trial, and in the course of its progress was called upon to give his evidence relative to the conference held with Gorges. He deposed, that Gorges told him on the water, that Essex had put himself into a strong guard at his house, and this would be the bloodiest day's work that ever was; wishing he would speed to court for the prevention of it; that for his own share in the transaction, he alleged he "wished Gorges to refuse their company, or else he would be undone."† This testimony was confirmed by Gorges, then in court; and was answered by Essex only with this observation, that it was totally different to what Gorges had mentioned to him, on returning to Essex House. These particulars constituted the sole evidence which Ralegh was required to give; and it may be hence naturally asked, why his name was so mixed up with this affair by the partizans of Essex? It appears, however, from a tract not usually referred to by our historians, that Essex, in his examination before the trial, in order to

* Camden, p. 544. † Oldys, p. 139.

give a colour of justice to his proceedings, affirmed that he pursued the violent measures to which he had recourse chiefly to defeat the machinations of Ralegh, and of his partizan Lord Cobham, against his own honour and safety. He asserted, that when he was desired, on the seventh of February, to attend the council, he had declined, because he was apprized that Ralegh and Cobham had prepared an ambuscade of musketeers upon the water, to murder him as he passed.* This pretext, supported only by the assertions of a man infuriated to desperation, is deprived of every shade of justice by the fact that Essex practised against the life of Ralegh, by means of his agents, a circumstance which was admitted by Sir Christopher Blount, one of the Earl's adherents, when put upon his trial; and from this confession, backed by the testimony of Sir Ferdinand Gorges, whom Blount sought to persuade into the bloody deed, no doubt remained but that Blount had aimed at the person of Ralegh, from a boat, four deadly shots.† On the other hand, it was generally supposed Ralegh was the individual who first apprized the government of the conspiracy, the particulars of which had been imparted to him from Gorges, who, doubtless, proved treacherous to his own party, and deceived

* Oldys, p. 137. Biographia, from Lord Bacon's Declarations of Essex's Treasons.

† Oldys, p. 138. also Birch, vol. i. p. 45.

them as to what had passed between him and Ralegh in the conference; and who, for that reason, combined with suspicions of further machinations against Essex, was never forgiven by the populace. The unfortunate Earl endeavoured, on his trial, to turn even the admonitions of Ralegh to Gorges into proofs of a conspiracy against his life; which was evidently implied, he alleged, in the advice of Ralegh to Gorges, to withdraw from the company of Essex, as "from a ship in danger to be wrecked." * Gorges was then produced, and gave an evidence confirming the guilt of Essex. Perhaps there were few present who were not concerned to see this treacherous friend, one, too, who had been distinguished in the service of his country, disgrace his name by a base disclosure of the guilt in which he had participated. It was obvious, that through some secret source, the enemies of Essex had gained accurate information of all his designs and proceedings. This source, in all human probability, was the perfidious Gorges; and the intercourse which Ralegh had with him, and the seeming fair terms on which they continued even till the fatal day of the insurrection, had, possibly, a far deeper source than common good will. After the conference at Drury House had been mentioned, and it was proved that the heads of

* Camden, p. 545.

the consultation had been written with his own hand, the Earl burst forth into passionate exclamations: — "The hope," he said, "of life and impunity had drawn these things out of some; and let them freely enjoy their life: for my part, death is more welcome to me than life: Cobham, Cecil, Ralegh's violence, hath driven me to the necessary defence of my life."

Thus did he seek to justify his own defection from loyalty. To this charge, Cecil and Cobham replied; but Ralegh appears to have entrusted the defence of his own conduct to Francis Lord Bacon, who, in a polished and elegant speech, affirmed that "Cobham, Cecil, and Ralegh were such sincere honest men, and had such rich estates, that they would never hazard their hopes and properties, by entering into so foul a conspiracy."* He commented also upon the inconsistencies of the Earl's allegations, in which he affirmed, sometimes, that he was to be stabbed in his bed, then slain in a boat, then killed by the Jesuits; and compared him to Pisistratus, who wounded his own body, and showed it to the people as if done by his adversaries; and having by that means obtained a guard of soldiers, oppressed the commonwealth.

In the course of this speech, Essex interrupted him by observing, that Lord Bacon had written,

* Camden, p. 546.

not long since, an elaborate letter in his name, to the Queen, against the very men whom he now defended. This was a just accusation; and afforded one among the various instances of tergiversation and insincerity which occurred in the life of the illustrious, but not faultless, Bacon.

After a warm contest between Cecil and Ralegh, which originated in a dispute concerning Dollman's work upon the succession to the crown, the prisoners were pronounced guilty, by an unanimous sentence of the peers. Greatly as the popular indignation was, at this time, incensed against Essex, few persons could hear his appeal to the mercy of the Queen, and to the mediation of the judges, without pity; and some, perhaps, not without remorse. On the edge of the axe being, after his sentence, turned towards him, he said, "This body might have done the Queen better service, if it had so pleased her: I shall be glad if it may be useful to her any way."

His execution succeeded his trial in seven days; and his repentance, in that short space of time, appeared to be genuine, whilst his confessions were copious. Ralegh was present at his death; a circumstance which was variously interpreted: by some he was charged with the baseness of pursuing his fallen rival even to the scaffold, that he might glory in the sight of those last sufferings, over which even the bitterness of party rancour would willingly cast a veil; by

others, more charitable, it was thought that he placed himself near the Earl, in order to answer any allegations which the dying man might make against him. He was, however, advised to withdraw; and with this counsel he found it expedient to comply.

In reply to the spirit in which these acknowledged facts have been frequently detailed by historians on this subject, it may be urged that in disclosing the dangerous schemes of Essex, even if the fact that he did so were proved, Ralegh performed his duty as a subject, and as a well-wisher to the tranquillity of his country. Nor can it be denied that he was justified in maintaining any intercourse with Gorges, which might afford an insight into the Earl's conspiracy. With regard to his assistance in the apprehension of Essex, it is obvious that he acted in his capacity of captain of the guard, an office which obliged him to attend on public occasions, and especially at those times when the public safety was endangered; and it would be unjust to reproach him with a service in which some of the most valiant and honourable persons were employed. The imputation of a conspiracy between him and Cobham to murder the Earl was unsupported by proof, and devoid of probability; and the charge of attending the execution of Essex, which appeared from motives of malignant triumph to contain much more likely grounds

of accusation, is in a great measure refuted by his own simple statement, after he had himself appeared before the tribunal of justice. On that solemn occasion he thus expressed himself: — "There was a report spread, that I should rejoice at the death of my Lord Essex, and that I should take tobacco in his presence; when, as I protest, I shed tears at his death, though I was one of the contrary faction, and at the time of his death I was all the while in the armoury at the further end, where I could but see him; I was sorry that I was not with him, for I heard he had a desire to see me, and be reconciled to me; so that I protest I lamented his death, and good cause had I, for it was the worse for me as it proved, for after he was gone I was little beloved." * Such, indeed, was the frame of mind in which Ralegh viewed the last moments of Essex, that, as he returned in a boat from the Tower, a sad presaging anticipation of his own fate pressed heavily upon his spirits, and excited the observation of his companions. † These gloomy forebodings may have been the effect of strong compassion, or of sensations of awe upon beholding an individual, so lately, and so peculiarly, the favourite of fortune, conducted to the scaffold; or they may have been produced by

* See Life of Ralegh, prefixed to History of the World, p. 39. 8vo. 1673.

† Osborne's Essays, p. 615.

the display of popular indignation which had obliged Ralegh to retreat from his station near to the scene of action into the armoury. At any rate, they evince any thing rather than an insolent triumph, or a brutal satisfaction at the destruction of one so envied, and, as it proved, so lamented as the unfortunate Essex.

It was, indeed, afterwards asserted, that Ralegh, in his letters, had said that he doubted the Earl's saintship, and that the "great boy had died like a calf and like a craven." It was likewise affirmed, that soon after the execution, a gentleman, returning from Spain, rested at Sherborne, where Ralegh then abode. On being asked what they said of the death of Essex in Spain, this person is stated to have replied, that they had not heard of it; but that he was sorry to hear that in the Island-voyage the Earl had brought Sir Walter Ralegh to his mercy." To this observation Ralegh is said to have answered, "But I trust I am now quit with him." The author of this tale also declares, that Ralegh gave instructions to the lieutenant of the Tower for the execution of the warrant." * Upon this information it has been well observed, that it was given by the person who afterwards ensnared him, to those who eventually condemned Sir Walter Ralegh to the scaffold. Common sense also sug-

* Oldys, p. 138.

gests that Ralegh, conscious as he was of some imputations of this nature, would not thus wantonly lay himself open to fresh constructions of a similar kind.

So great was the esteem in which Essex was held, that Ralegh was never again well received in public; and even Elizabeth, in addition to the griefs of a breaking heart, experienced the chagrin of seeing that her popularity was diminished, that the streets were less crowded, and the acclamations, as she passed, less cordial than before.* The popular feeling was right: Essex, although a dangerous, was not an irreclaimable subject; and Elizabeth evinced as much harshness in thus punishing his offences, as a parent who visits with severe chastisement a child whom his folly has spoiled. Neither can Ralegh, even with the benefit of every excuse, rise untainted above the suspicion which attached to him in this affair. He must, in justice, be indeed absolved from the heinous and almost diabolical designs laid to his charge; but great minds should be judged by a high standard of honour, and of moral feeling. That which might not appear extraordinary in Cobham, or even in Cecil, became reprehensible in Bacon and in Ralegh. In consonance with the high spirit of patriotism which he professed, with the

* Osborne's Trad. Memoirs of Q. E.

demeanour of a gentleman, with the sentiments of a Christian, Ralegh should have discarded from his inmost thoughts every wish but that for mercy, every intention but that of promoting public tranquillity, every recollection of past injury from Essex, every idea of possible rivalry for the future. That such was not the inference to be drawn from his conduct, is, unhappily, too true: in what degree he was reprehensible, it is extremely difficult to determine; but although the popular feelings are often exaggerated, they are seldom wholly unfounded. His mediation with regard to some of the other delinquents was effectual; and it is not extravagant to suppose, that in the wavering state of the Queen's mind, it might not have proved unavailable with respect to Essex.* Sir Edmund Baynham, and John Lyttleton, two of the conspirators, were pardoned, upon the payment each of a considerable sum to Ralegh, who interceded in their behalf with the Queen. The bribe held out in this instance by Lyttleton is said to have amounted to ten thousand pounds. Such was the mode in which mercy was purchased, even in the eulogized reign of Elizabeth; and such the base and mercenary spirit in this instance displayed even by the liberal and patriotic Ralegh.

It was long before Essex was forgotten, or his

* Camden, p. 549.

enemies forgiven, by the people. He died in the thirty-fourth year of his age, a period at which his father was said to have warned him upon his death-bed. * The lower classes regarded his execution as a murder, and were the more angry that intercession had been made by the opposite party for Southampton, but none for Essex. † They forgot, in their violent condemnation of the government which had first imprisoned, then sentenced him to death, the obligations which Essex had received from his country; for, in his public employments, he had reaped at least three hundred thousand pounds ‡: they forgot his influence with the military, and his asserted pretensions to the crown; and they saw not, with the exception of those immediately about the court, the agonized reluctance with which Elizabeth signed the warrant, nor the griefs which even her strong mind could not, after his execution, controul. It is probable that the sentiments of Ralegh upon this mournful occasion were equally concealed, or misunderstood. The history of human motives has, perhaps, in few instances, been faithfully disclosed to the world.

Throughout the whole of this melancholy business, the Queen abandoned herself to a de-

* Camden, p. 552.

† Osborne's Essays, p. 610. London, 1673.

‡ Note in Biographia, art. Devereux.

jection so mingled with irritation, that few even of her favourites ventured to address her on matters of business. Yet it seems that her resentment was not directed to the enemies of Essex, but to those who had been his most intimate associates.

Amongst the courtiers who had offended the Queen, during the recent deputyship of Essex in Ireland, was Sir John Harrington, the godson of Elizabeth, and, usually, the indulged companion of her lighter hours. Secured, by his privileged relation to her majesty, from the effects of her serious resentment, and permitted in his character of a wit to treat as sport those passing events by which the fate of less happy courtiers was determined, Harrington had lately in some measure incurred the displeasure of Elizabeth during his campaign in Ireland with Essex, not so much for his visit to Lord Tyrone, the leader of the rebels there, as from his changing the title of captain into that of knight on being endowed with that order; — a dire offence to Elizabeth, who, on hearing of twenty-four persons being knighted by Essex at the siege of Roan, contemptuously remarked, "that my Lord should have made his alms-house first." *

No troubles or perils could however chill the vivacity of Harrington, nor check the exuberance

* Sydney Papers, vol. ii. p. 129.

of his wit and fancy. Facetiously described by Fuller as a "poet in all things except his poverty," Harrington indulged in one of the supposed privileges of an imaginative turn, by extravagant habits, and a thoughtless indifference to the future. His intimacy with Ralegh was considerable; and it is satisfactory to find, at a later period, when Ralegh was under the cloud of court displeasure in the reign of James, that Harrington had the independence to express a firm reliance upon the essential points of his character. It is even more satisfactory to those, who, admiring the talents of Ralegh, are disposed to view his conduct with partiality, to perceive that the affair of Essex had not impressed Harrington with any notions prejudicial to Ralegh's honour and veracity. It is evident, also, from the following passage, that Cecil had not forgiven, in Ralegh, some parts of his behaviour in that affair, which have not been explained by any of the contemporary writers, sufficiently to show how far they were calculated to rouse the anger of the secretary. "Cecil doth "beare no love to Raleighe, as you well know, in "the matter of Essex. I wiste not that he (Ra- "legh) hath evyll desygn, in pointe of faithe or "relygion. As he hath often discoursede to me "moch lernynge, wysdome, and freedome, I "knowe he dothe somewhat dyffer in opynyon "for some others; but I thynke alsoe his hearte

" is well fixed in every honeste nature, to serve " the state, especiallie as he is versede in foraign " matters, his skyll thereyn being alwaies estima- " ble and prayseworthie. In relygion, he hathe " showne (in pryvate talke) great depth and good " readynge, as I once experyenced at hys owne " howse, before manie lernyde men." * Happy himself in escaping unhurt from the snares of a courtier's life, Harrington experienced enough of its vicissitudes to congratulate himself that if he had been driven " amongst state rocks and sightless dangers," he " had not ventured so far as to be quite sunken herein." † For some time after his return from Ireland, he was regarded almost on the same footing as the delinquent Essex, and was threatened with the Fleet; to which he answered, "poetically," " that coming so late from the land-service, he hoped he should not be pressed to serve in her Majesty's fleet in Fleet-Street." At length he gained a full audience of the Queen, where she, being herself accuser, judge, and witness, he was cleared, and graciously dismissed. He then retired to Kelston, near Bath; a seat which had been settled by Henry the Eighth upon one of his natural children, a daughter, who was the first wife of Sir John Harrington's father. ‡ Nevertheless,

* Nugæ Antiquæ, vol. i. pp. 342, 343.
† Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

he could not resist the inclination which curiosity and habit occasion, sometimes to visit the court, notwithstanding his resolution to "leave great matters to those who liked them better than himself." He found, at every successive interview, the strength, the spirits, and the self-command of the Queen fast diminishing, and neither Ralegh nor Cecil could be ignorant of the sorrows which were making rapid inroads into Elizabeth's constitution. Her decline, "too fast," as many thought, "for the evil that they should get by her death," and too slow for her own release from misery, was now apparent to all. She joined, indeed, in her former amusements, but it was with a faltering step, and with faint attempts at forced cheerfulness. When, after a short absence, Harrington was summoned to her presence, she inquired if he had seen Tyrone? On his reply, that he had seen him with the lord deputy, she smote her bosom, and said, "Oh now it mindeth me that you were *one* who saw this *man* elsewhere," — the connection between Harrington and Essex being thus recalled to her. And when Harrington, thinking to revive in her Majesty the old remembrance of his pleasantries, which had often amused her, read some verses, she told him, in the language of a breaking heart, "that she was passed all relish for fooleries." But during the short space of time that she survived Essex,

the wretched Queen, condemned to pay the usual tax of royalty, was constrained to sustain the weariness of ceremonial with a wounded spirit, and to support the cares of business, when all enjoyment of her sovereignty was at an end.

1601. In the summer of this year she made her last progress, in which Ralegh accompanied her to Dover, and probably to Hampshire. Whilst the Queen was at Dover, the siege of Ostend, by the Archduke Albert, alarmed Henry the Fourth for his own frontiers, and brought him to Calais to provide for the safety of his dominions. When Elizabeth heard of his arrival there, she dispatched Sir Thomas Edmonds to make her formal congratulations and inquiries respecting his health. In return for this compliment, Henry sent over the celebrated Rosni, Duc de Sully, one of the most experienced statesmen and profound politicians of the day. It was the fortune of Ralegh, with Cobham and Sir Robert Sydney and others, to receive this celebrated man on his landing at Dover; a circumstance which is mentioned by Sully in his Memoirs of the Reign of Henry the Fourth.* It is to be regretted that no observations on the part of Ralegh, on meeting a man so justly renowned, have come to light; since, perhaps, there is no subject of contemplation, in

* Sully's Memoirs, vol. v. p. 60.

human affairs, more interesting than the sentiments with which great men regard each other upon their first interview. Whilst the Queen pursued her course into Hampshire, the Marshal Biron was also deputed by Henry the Fourth to make an embassy into England; and reaching London on the 5th of September, he proceeded with a magnificent retinue of three or four hundred persons to the neighbourhood of Basing, the seat of the Marquis of Winchester, to whom the Queen was then paying one of those burdensome and sometimes ruinous visits with which it was, in those times, customary for our English monarchs to honour their subjects. Biron took up his abode at the Vine, a seat of Lord Sandys, furnished with seven-score beds from the neighbouring gentry, and with furniture from the queen's palace for the foreign guests. The festival which here took place is said to have been one of the most continued and sumptuous entertainments ever given on a royal progress. * Among ten persons whom the Queen, contrary to her usual proceeding, knighted at one time, was Carew, that younger brother of Sir Walter Ralegh †, who afterwards sold his patrimonial estates of Widdycombe, Ralegh, and Fardel; and, removing from his native county, became the ancestor of the Raleghs of Wiltshire, who flourished long after

* Nicholl's Progresses of Queen Elizabeth, vol. ii. p. 6.
† Ibid.

the reign of Elizabeth.* Sir Carew was favoured, in several instances, by Queen Elizabeth, and held the office of steward of her manor of Gillingham in Gloucestershire.†

Two inferences are deducible from the circumstance of his being knighted at Basing. First, we are led to surmise that Ralegh was probably present upon such an occasion, and that he participated in the festivities given in honour of Biron; and, secondly, we are brought to a still more certain conclusion that Ralegh's favour, in the estimation of Elizabeth, had in no degree suffered from his recent share in the cabals against Essex. During the month of October in this year, parliament met, the last in Elizabeth's reign, and the first of which there is a list extant of the members.‡ Sir Walter and his brother both served in this parliament; the one for Cornwall, the other for Foway in that county. Sir Walter on this occasion made a very creditable and conspicuous figure in the House of Commons; in his speech against the act to promote the sowing of hemp. It was his opinion that the penalties enforced by this statute, in some instances, retarded the progress of agriculture; in others, that it obliged those to plough who were scarcely able to furnish the seed-corn to sow the

1601.

* Note in Oldys, p. 139. † Ibid.

‡ Oldys, p. 139. from Townshend's Historical Collections.

land. "I do not," said he, "like this constraining of men to manure the ground at our wills; but rather let every man use his ground for that which it is most fit for, and therein use his own discretion. For where the law provides that every man must plough the third of his land, I know divers poor people have done so to avoid the penalty of the statute, when their abilities have been so poor that they have not been able to buy seed-corn to sow it; nay, they have been fain to hire others to plough it, which if it had been unploughed, would have been good pasture for beasts, or might have been converted to other good uses." The bill was afterwards thrown out by a majority of a hundred and sixty-two to a hundred and three.* Ralegh next spoke in favour of the subsidy; a question on which he was opposed by Bacon, who contended in favour of collecting the demand of three hundred thousand pounds from the poor as well as the rich; a measure which was adopted, and which was afterwards acknowledged by Ralegh to be necessary to make up the sum. In his Prerogative of Parliaments, he informs us, however, that his solicitude to tax the better sort only, was suggested by the Queen herself, who "desired much to save the common people;" and that he did so by her command.†

* Oldys, p. 139. from Townshend's Historical Collections.

† Ralegh's Prerogative of Parliaments.

The subject of monopolies was next discussed; and in this the personal interests of Ralegh were peculiarly concerned. This theme of discussion related to a practice which had not first originated with Elizabeth; but it had been carried to a greater extent by her than by her predecessors, for a reason creditable to her subjects, but prejudicial to their comforts. The great achievements which the age had witnessed were so numerous among the English, that Elizabeth was unable to reward her subjects in a manner adequate to their merits, except by granting patents for monopolies, which were sold to those persons who desired to trade in any particular article.* The consequences of these grants may readily be conceived, — the immense and unfair prices imposed upon the public, to the great deterioration of trade, and the odium justly incurred by those who were the instruments and gainers in this species of oppression. Every possible commodity for the purposes of luxury, or the means of amusement, and even the necessaries of life, were under the control of these patentees, who were armed with powers from government to enforce their privileges, and to levy fines upon those whom they charged with interfering in their patent. Not only was an immoderate and arbitrary price thus affixed to every article, but industry and competition were precluded, ill

* Hume.

will promoted, and liberty curtailed; many of the patentees having the power to enter any place, where they imagined that goods, which they had licenses for selling, were secreted.* It may be mentioned, as an additional evil of this extraordinary system, that whilst commerce was diminished and the number of vexatious statutes and limitations multiplied; whilst the middling classes were shackled and the poor oppressed, the spirit thus engendered among the nobility was paltry and debasing; avarice was cherished; and a disregard to the interests of our fellow-men necessarily associated with notions of selfish aggrandizement.

When Ralegh, with other of the monopolists, appeared in the debate on this question, he defended himself with considerable spirit and eloquence against any peculiar censure attaching to his own conduct, and affirmed his willingness to give up his patent in case of the rest being also repealed.† He explained the nature of his patent, which was chiefly for tin, and which he affirmed had benefited the poor miners by raising their weekly earnings from two to four shillings. He informed the house that it was the same as that which the dukes of Cornwall had hitherto been allowed to exercise. He inveighed in

* Hume, reign of Elizabeth, 8vo. edition, p. 324.

† Birch, p. 46.

strong terms against other monopolies, especially against that possessed by Sir Henry Neville for the transportation of ordnance, by which even the Spaniards were provided with instruments for our destruction. It was remarked that a long and profound silence followed this speech. It is painful to deteriorate from the merit of Ralegh in the sacrifice which he proposed; but he was probably aware of the Queen's intention with respect to monopolies. The most popular act of her reign was her ready acquiescence to the opinions and wishes of her parliament, in this instance; her repeal of some of the most grievous of the licenses, and the gracious manner in which the proposition was proffered: and never was gratitude expressed in a more fulsome, obsequious, and almost profane manner, than on this occasion.* Besides the proceedings which have been enumerated, Ralegh voted also for the repeal of a statute of tillage, enacted in time of dearth, and for other bills of local or of passing importance.

During the period of his life which embraced the last ten years of Elizabeth's reign, Ralegh devoted considerable attention to the concerns of Cornwall, and found leisure, notwithstanding the pressure of public business, to study its antiquities and to cherish its interests. He pro-

* Hume, 8vo. p. 328.

cured the restoration of seventeen manors in that county, to their ancient tenure, which was disputed at Nisi Prius, although it had subsisted for three centuries. The tenants had deputed Richard Carew of Anthony, one of the deputy-lieutenants of Cornwall, to present a petition to Lord Burleigh, entreating the continuance of their ancient privileges; and this remonstrance was seconded by Ralegh, who, whilst residing in the west of England, wrote earnestly in behalf of the supplicants. He also prevented the imposition of an ancient tax upon the curing of fish, imposed in the time of Henry the Second, and now revived by some interested persons, who, under pretence of serving the crown, sought to obtain patents to prevent the salting and drying of fish without licenses. The destruction of this branch of commerce, and the oppression of the poor Cornish trader, formerly heavily burdened with fines to the ancient earls of Cornwall, were the consequences of this dishonourable attempt to enrich private individuals at the expense of the community.* Ralegh applied the whole force of his interest, and the strength of his arguments, to prevent a result so injurious to the prosperity of Cornwall, of which he was then lieutenant. His next exertions related to the reduction of the taxes upon the manufacture of

* Oldys, pp. 128, 129.

tin; and in this matter, which was disputed before the council, he was equally successful; joining personally in the discussion, in which he attempted to restore the privilege of pre-emption, founded in the reign of Edward the First. The exercise of this privilege was afterwards vested in Ralegh, as the person most qualified to regulate it judiciously and impartially.* For the zeal with which he promoted these regulations, Ralegh obtained the encomiums of Richard Carew, one of the numerous branches of the ancient family of that name, and better known as the author of a "Survey of Cornwall;" — a work which he dedicated to Ralegh, with a flattering, but apparently well-merited address. In this composition, Ralegh is assured, that whilst he exercises an extensive command, both civil and military, over the people of Cornwall, he possesses a far greater interest in "their hearts and loves" by his kindness. "Your ears and mouth have ever been open to hear and deliver our grievances; and your feet and hands ready to go and work their redress; and that, not only as a magistrate of yourself, but also, very often, as a suitor and solicitor to others of the highest place."† Such was the language in which the benevolent labours of Ralegh for the lower classes of Cornwall were eulogized. Happy

* Oldys, pp. 128, 129. † Ibid.

had it been for him, if his views had been henceforward limited to philanthropic endeavours to promote the local benefit of his countrymen, or in the advancement of scientific and literary knowledge.

In conducting the concerns over which his situation of lord warden of the stannaries, and other occasional offices, required him to preside, Ralegh found considerable assistance from his antiquarian researches, which afterwards became highly important, and which were extended by him to the study of history.

The study of antiquities, and of all pursuits connected with history, was then much in vogue; and considerable opportunities were afforded for the most intricate and important researches, from the dispersion of many valuable tracts from the monasteries but recently dissolved, and from the visitations of our universities and colleges.* Stimulated by these inducements, a society of antiquarians had been formed in 1572, under the auspices of Archbishop Parker, the patron of the revival of the Saxon language. To this learned association Ralegh belonged, until the illiberal and impolitic jealousy of the government crushed in their commencement the exertions which, if freely exercised at so advantageous a period, might have proved highly beneficial to our na-

* Biographia Britannica, art. Cotton.

tional literature; and would, perhaps, have illumined many of those obscure points of our history, concerning which, conjecture and disputation will never, in all probability, be at rest. In vain, however, had the Society petitioned Queen Elizabeth to be incorporated into a society or academy for the study of antiquities. Devoted to the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, that princess desired not to run the risk of interfering with those important institutions; and her example was not only followed by her successor, but umbrage taken at the frequent meetings of the antiquarians, to whom the suspicious temper of the government attached sinister and dangerous motives.

Under these unfavourable circumstances, the Society was dissolved*; but its important objects were pursued sedulously, although with far less facility, by individuals. Indeed if we affix to the reign of James the First any distinct literary era, it would probably be that of antiquarian lore; and if we recall the names of Verstegan, Camden, Speed, Cotton, Selden, Bacon, Ralegh, and of many other eminent persons, we shall

* Until a more favourable era, as far as royal indulgence was concerned, but a far less advantageous one for the researches into those memorials, many of which had been dilapidated, and some altogether destroyed, in the civil wars. It was revived in 1707, and in 1751 incorporated by George the Second.

acknowledge, that, although the efforts of the antiquaries may have been circumscribed, their enthusiasm in the cause was not, perhaps, diminished by opposition. At the time of Ralegh's association in this infant and oppressed society, the meetings were held in the apartments of the garter king at arms (supposed to have been Sir William Dethewick), at Derby House, which is now appropriated to the Heralds' Office.* Among the names of the early members were those not only of the retired and humble labourers in the pursuit of knowledge, but of the great, the wealthy, and the warlike. The elder Burleigh, Sir Philip Sydney, and the Herberts, Earls of Pembroke, were thus brought into contact with the indefatigable Stow, Spelman, Camden, Cotton, Hooker, and Selden. With some of these eminent men, Ralegh maintained an intimacy, creditable and advantageous to himself; to others he afforded the assistance which his abundant means enabled him, at this time, to afford: from several he obtained, in the progress of his own works, those aids which the learned and curious can alone supply.

Among those to whom the learned were principally indebted for the stores of information which his own diligence and liberality enabled him to dispense, was Sir Robert Cotton, whose

* Oldys, p. 130.

name, as long as our national library exists, will never be forgotten; nor should it ever be remembered except with gratitude. To him Ralegh, in the latter part of his days, whilst in prison, applied for some of those valuable corner-stones of knowledge upon which a fabric of extensive interest and importance might securely be reared. Sir Robert Cotton bore the same relation to Ralegh, and to many others, as that in which the mineralogist, who tries and discovers the vein of ore, stands to him who raises the precious metal from the earth, and displays it in the most pleasing form to an admiring world. Consulted as an oracle by the learned men of his time, he had supplied manuscript materials for the histories of Camden, Hayward*, Speed, Bacon, Selden, as well as for that afterwards published by Ralegh.† Employed from the early age of eighteen in the collection of manuscripts, few persons had more to bestow than Sir Robert Cotton; and what was next in importance, none had a greater disposition to render his accumulated treasures useful to others. There were subjects upon which it was not in those days deemed sufficient for historical writers to trust to the reports of others; and it was not uncommon for antiquaries to make long, and, in the absence of regular travelling accom-

* See Hayward's Life of Edward VI.

† Biographia Britannica.

modations, tedious journeys, to any particular spot which they desired to commemorate. It was about the time when Ralegh's name is first associated with the Society of Antiquaries, that the excursion of Camden and of Cotton to Carlisle was undertaken, and a part of the Picts' wall, still preserved at Connington, brought away for the inspection of the curious. So great was the fame of Sir Robert Cotton's collection, that no work of importance was commenced without referring to that compendium of charters, records, and other documents. Wedded to his manuscripts, and in the peaceful prosecution of literary studies, he long survived the less happy Ralegh; so that all access to his stores of learning was, during Ralegh's life, requested as a personal favour. After effecting as much, in the service of historical truth, as it appears possible, in the short span of life, to accomplish, Sir Robert left his inestimable library to his family, with such a security in his will against the chance of its being sold or dispersed, that posterity should have the benefit of referring to it as a collection.*

* This collection consists of MSS. in loose skins, or bound up in volumes, sometimes many upon different subjects in one cover. They came into the possession of Sir Robert Cotton, sometimes by legacy, sometimes by purchase; and were collected at visitations, upon the dissolution of the monasteries. The Cotton library was much augmented by his sons, Sir Thomas and Sir John Cotton, and remained in the family residence, in Westminster, near

Whilst Ralegh thus enriched his works with contributions from Sir Robert Cotton, he had the credit of affording aid to his relative John Hooker in the compilation of his "Records of Devon."* This industrious antiquary, the assistant of Holinshed in his great work, the Chronicles of Britain, was the uncle of Richard Hooker, author of the justly celebrated work on Ecclesiastical Polity. These ingenious and learned men were remotely related to Ralegh, and were both born in Devonshire, which Camden describes as a "countrey fruitfull of noble wits." † Hooker dedicated his Supplement to the Chronicles of Ireland, in Holinshed, to Ralegh; and in that address to his relative and patron he has testified his gratitude for the benefits conferred, and his respect for the talents possessed, by that valuable friend.

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the House of Commons. In the reign of William III. an act of parliament was passed for securing it in the family of the Cottons; but Cotton House was afterwards bought from the great grandson of Sir Robert, by Queen Anne, and was made a repository both for the Cottonian and the Royal Library. Some years afterwards, it was removed to a house near Westminster Abbey belonging to the crown; where a fire breaking out in 1731, one hundred and eleven books were lost, burnt, or wholly defaced, and ninety-nine rendered imperfect. It was afterwards removed to the dormitory of Westminster School, and since to the British Museum. Note in Biog. art. Cotton.

* A work which has never been printed. Oldys, p. 5.

† Camden, p. 514.

The assistance afforded to Hooker by Ralegh proves how considerable a proficiency he must have attained in antiquarian researches; and he appears to have had a collection of manuscripts,—the learned Selden applying to him for the loan of some from his library.* The acquaintance with this indefatigable man, which must, in all probability, either have preceded, or have been the consequence of an application of this nature from Selden, was an advantage to any person interested in such pursuits, which may scarcely be expected to occur again: for Selden,—endowed as he was with almost unparalleled energy, with an admirable foundation of learning, and living, as he did, when literary men mingled but little in the gaieties and pleasures of the world, and seldom quitted their retirements except when some urgent question of politics or religion called them forth,—had the good fortune, like Sir Robert Cotton, to reap the benefit of those monastic wrecks, which none but the learned knew how to prize; and which therefore became, at a moderate expense of every thing but time, their property. Hence he found materials for his work on the Dominion of the Kings of England over the Narrow Seas, chiefly from the monastic records†; and happily conciliated the

* Oldys, p. 130.

† Preface to Tanner's Notitia, p. 57.

displeasure of James I. towards him on account of some former works, by settling a disputed right to the fisheries on our coasts, to which the Dutch had lately set claim. * Partly by these means, also, Selden was enabled to collect the valuable library which he left, with an earnest injunction to his executors to distribute it among themselves, rather than expose it to public sale. In consequence of his further remark, that it would suit some public library, or college, they considered it, however, right to remove it to some chambers in the King's Bench Walk; but no house being provided for it by that Society, —in that instance displaying neither learning nor wisdom,—it was placed in rooms added purposely to the Bodleian Library, with a Latin inscription in the apartment, denoting the gratitude and respect of those who received the munificent gift. Thus, within a very short space of time, were three valuable collections, which, if once dispersed, could never have been replaced, conferred upon public institutions.

In being contemporary with Bodley, Selden, and Cotton, Ralegh in all probability enjoyed not only the benefit of these collections, but, what is in all cases more important, that of their counsels and conversations. The mind almost sickens to learn with certainty to what extent his

* This work was published 1636, long after being written, and was dedicated to Charles I. Biog.

communications with these great men proceeded: but there are, unhappily, no traces of any thing more than the facts that he exchanged with them mutual good offices.

Contrary to that which commonly occurs with learned men, Selden, obscure in his mode of writing, and apt to crowd his works with an oppressive and perplexing weight of learned matter, had, in his conversation, according to Lord Clarendon, "the best faculty of making hard things easy."* By the same admirable judge, "he was accounted a person whom no character can flatter; so conversant with books that you would have thought his whole life passed in reading; yet his humanity was such, that you would have thought him bred in courts."† Yet Selden, like Ralegh, was subjected to representations of a far different nature; and whilst he was sometimes accused of being harsh in his nature and manners, he was not only reprobated by the clergy, and prosecuted by the desire of King James for a work controverting the divine right of Tithes, but was suspected by some persons of infidelity, or, in the fashionable language of that day, Hobbism; a charge from which he has been strenuously defended by Baxter, upon the authority of Sir Matthew Hale.‡

* Clarendon's Characters. Reliquiæ Wottoniæ, p. 138.
† Biog. Brit. ‡ Ibid.

The circumstance of Ralegh's supplying Selden with books, leads to the conclusion that Selden, in return, may have afforded some assistance to Ralegh in his historical works. The work on the Prerogative of Parliaments, which he dedicated to King James, was the first which he published requiring historical accúracy; but it is uncertain at what time he began, or whether he was actually the author of an "Introduction to a Breviary of the History of England, with the Reign of William I., entitled the Conqueror," and published in 1693, from the MSS. of Archbishop Sancroft, by Dr. Moore, afterwards Bishop of Ely. By one of the biographers of Ralegh the authenticity of this piece is doubted*; but its resemblance in style to the usual composition of his writings appears to afford some internal evidence of its being his production. It has been also conjectured, that this was one of the works which employed his latter days†; but upon this subject, since many years elapsed between his death and the publication, the greatest possible uncertainty rests. Many of his works remained long in manuscript; for in the period of the civil wars, circumstances were unfavourable to the reception of his works in particular, and to the publication generally of literary productions. Such, however, was the worth in which Ralegh's works

* Cayley, vol. ii. p. 188. † Ibid. p. 186.

were held by the celebrated John Hampden, that he was at the expense of having three thousand four hundred and fifty-two sheets of Ralegh's manuscripts transcribed a short time before the civil wars; — an amanuensis being furnished with fire and candle, and a private apartment, with an attendant to deliver the originals into his hands, and to receive his copies as soon as they were finished. * The writings themselves, many of which have since been published, justly merited this tribute from the patriot, who probably found in them the seeds of many valuable ideas of our constitution and government. That Ralegh availed himself of the best sources of information to enrich his works, is obvious, not only from his connexion with the Society of Antiquaries, and from his communications with the ingenious men of whom it was composed; but from his encouragement of those institutions which could aid him and other students in the progress of knowledge. Thus, whilst he lent books to Selden, he also contributed the sum of fifty pounds to augment the Bodleian Library. †

In his days of prosperity, Ralegh was associated not only with the studious and erudite, but with the witty and the imaginative characters who illumined the sixteenth century. Before the accession of James, Ralegh instituted a

* Lloyd's Worthies. See Cayley, p. 189.

† Cayley, vol. ii.

meeting of intellectual men at the Mermaid, a celebrated tavern in Friday-street.* To this club, Shakspeare, Beaumont, Fletcher, Jonson, Selden, Cotton, Carew, Martin, Donne, and many other distinguished literary men, were accustomed to repair; forming an association certainly unrivalled in any preceding time, unequalled by any subsequent assemblage, and, in all probability, not likely to be witnessed in our own days. Here, in the luxury of unrestrained and congenial society, were to be heard the "wit-combats" of Shakspeare and Jonson †, and the grave disquisitions of Selden, Cotton, and Ralegh; but if we may credit the attractive description of the poet‡, playful raillery, exalted by the power of genius, predominated over abstruse discussion.

"What things have we seen
Done at the Mermaid! heard words that have been
So nimble, and so full of subtle flame,
As if that every one from whom they came
Had meant to put his wit in a jest," &c.

* Gifford's Life of Ben Jonson, p. 65. prefixed to an edition of his works.

† Referred to by Fuller. "Many," says he, "were the wit combates betweene Ben Jonson and Shakespeare. I behold them like a Spanish great galleon and an English man of war. Master Jonson, like the former, was built far higher in learning, solid, but slow in his performances. Shakespeare, like the latter, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds by the quickness of his wit and invention." Fuller, vol. ii. p. 415.

‡ Jonson.

The result of such communications as these, is frequently a close intimacy between such of the parties as discover in each other that indefinable power of sympathy, best described by the term congeniality, which is found to be so capricious in its application, yet so delightful in its consequences. That this bond did not exist between Ralegh and Jonson, is evident from the opinion entertained of the former by the great dramatist. At what time their acquaintance commenced; upon what principles or with what sentiments it was continued; or how far it was cemented, or rather perpetuated, by obligations on one side or on the other;—are points of extreme uncertainty. There is no doubt of their introduction to each other having taken place in Jonson's youth and in Ralegh's middle age; for Jonson was twenty-two years younger than Ralegh, and was scarcely arrived at the zenith of his fame when the unfortunate Ralegh was in the decline both of his natural existence and of his fortunes. It is well known that Jonson, although a man of originally good family, was reduced by the imprisonment of his father in the reign of Queen Mary, and by the second marriage of his mother with a bricklayer, to work in that craft for his subsistence. For this purpose he was taken from St. John's College, Cambridge, whither he was sent after receiving at Westminster school the instructions of the

celebrated, and no less virtuous Camden. Reduced to this condition, in which the aspirations of an intelligent mind and the enjoyments of imagination may be presumed to have added a species of tantalizing torture to the mortifications of low pursuits and the privations of penury, Jonson is stated to have been selected by Ralegh as the tutor of his son Walter, with the charge of accompanying him in his travels abroad. It would be agreeable to the partial biographers of Ralegh if this fact could be accredited. That he had discernment to perceive, and liberality to prize merit in an humble, and, to a man of classical education, degrading station, would be a consideration both creditable to him and gratifying to all who wish well to his memory. The statement is, however, widely at variance with truth. It has been accompanied by the assertion that it was Camden who recommended Jonson to Ralegh. * That this was the origin of their acquaintance may be true; but that it could not have been with the view of Jonson's undertaking the tuition of young Ralegh is obvious, from the fact that at this period of Jonson's life the supposed object of his instructions was not in existence,—his birth happening in the year 1595,

* Gifford, p. x.

when Jonson was serving as a volunteer in Flanders.*

The anecdotes, too lightly admitted as authentic, of the young student's contempt for his master, and of his sending the poet, when intoxicated, in a basket to Sir Walter, are refuted by this simple remembrance of certain dates; and happily, both for the tutor and for the pupil, no such disgrace seems to have befallen the one, nor such example to have disgusted the other of the parties.

From all that can be gathered on this subject, it may be inferred that no cordial intimacy nor bond of gratitude subsisted between Ralegh and Ben Jonson. The poet is said to have admired the talents of his eminent contemporary, but to have distrusted his sincerity.† He is even asserted to have remarked, that Sir Walter Ralegh "esteemed more fame than conscience."‡ Perhaps there are few men, who, like Ben Jonson, see closely into the darkest passions and into the most hidden motives of human nature, and who yet are able to divest their minds of suspicion, and their hearts of that contamination which proceeds from a long contemplation of vice, sufficiently, to render a just tribute of approbation to the virtues of others. It is probable, also, that party feelings may have influenced Jonson's opinion of

* Gifford, p. x. † Ibid, p. xi. ‡ Ibid. p. cxxii.

Ralegh; for whilst the latter was disgraced, and eventually deprived both of liberty and life, by James the First, Jonson was the peculiar favourite of that monarch as a dramatist, and was consequently disposed to view political questions much in the same point of view as the sovereign whom he served. His sentiments with respect to Ralegh must not, therefore, be allowed to influence us without some caution: otherwise, as a contemporary, and as an associate in the far-famed meetings at the Mermaid, Jonson must be allowed to have had ample means of forming an estimate of Ralegh's character.

He was besides employed in assisting Ralegh in the compilation of the History of the World, to the frontispiece of which he wrote some good lines.* Jonson, like many great writers of the time, had an excellent library, collected, by degrees, from his own scanty means, and containing more scarce and valuable books than any other private collection in the kingdom. Selden, in referring to a book possessed by Jonson, has not omitted to indulge in that which is to generous minds a gratification — the opportunity to eulogize both his friend the dramatist, and his library†; commending not only his talents as a poet, but that "special worth in literature, accurate judgment, and performance

* Gifford, note xi. † Ibid. p. 147. note.

known only to the *few* who are truly able to know him." Among these, Ralegh, it is obvious, was so fortunate as to benefit largely from the acquirements of Jonson, although he may not have shared in the affection and good opinion of that remarkable, and, in a peculiar line, almost unrivalled genius.

It were endless to enumerate the illustrious men of this period with whom Ralegh, in all probability, was personally acquainted. That little of his correspondence has been preserved, except where it related to his public concerns, is a circumstance to be seriously regretted. * The man who could boast of intimate communication with Shakspeare, Beaumont, and Jonson, must, without relation to his own natural or acquired talents, have merited well the care of his surviving relatives and executors to his slightest epistolary compositions: but when we consider how valuable and how interesting would have been, not the remarks as relating only to others, but as conveying the sentiments of the relater, we are tempted to revile at the supineness or carelessness of those to whom the papers of Sir Walter Ralegh were committed. Perhaps it may be observed, and with some appearance of justice, that his life was so chequered with incidents, so occupied with the

* See some letters in the Appendix, collected from the State Paper Office, and now first published.

active business of life, that he may have had little inclination, and found little leisure, to enter into the engrossing occupation of communicating his thoughts on literary subjects to others. To this, those who have perused the few of Ralegh's letters still extant may reply, that they display an ease and fluency which can only be acquired by habit: they are, in fact, specimens of the most perfect mode of expression, whether they relate to the emotions of the inmost soul, its cares, its tenderness, or its hopes, or whether they comprize simple narrative and explanation. In all his works Ralegh describes that in which he was at any time peculiarly concerned with a distinctness, animation, and force of language in which few of our English writers have excelled him. That which he carried to such perfection, he probably indulged in as a recreation. He has left us, of his familiar correspondence, enough only to excite a strong desire for more abundant means of judging of his excellence in this line.

The season was now nearly at an end for Ralegh's tranquil enjoyment of social or literary conversation, or for study undisturbed by corroding anxieties. In the beginning of this year, the Queen, who was now in her seventieth year, betrayed more plainly those symptoms of decay which had been obvious to her attendants since the death of Essex. By determined temperance, both in abstaining from wine, and in her diet, she

had hitherto preserved uninjured the vigour of a constitution which seemed formed by nature to encounter the cares and risks of royalty. She was wont to say, "that temperance was the noblest part of physic;" an admirable sentiment, but which, with the prejudice of one who had ever been accustomed to an obsequious compliance with her opinions, she carried so far as to reject all aid of medicine when sickness actually assailed her. Perhaps she may have been aware that the sufferings of a mind diseased constituted her only specific complaint, and that her malady had passed the influence of human ministration. She had now recourse to those aids which, if sincerely resorted to, are never ineffectual in any season of life. She frequented divine service, and had prayers read in her presence more frequently than ever; quitting Westminster also for Richmond, to enjoy quiet of body, and religious repose. Yet the unhappy closing days of her existence were embittered not only by those regrets for Essex, which died only when she herself expired, but by the intrigues of her courtiers with her presumed successor, James the Sixth, and by the neglect to which her acuteness and experience could not remain insensible. Once, when in a state of irritation, she exclaimed in the bitterness of her heart, "They have yoked my neck; I have none in whom I may trust; my estate is turned upside down!" *

* Camden, p. 585.

a complaint which was wrung from her, by the advice of some of her courtiers to send for James even before her days were ended. Elizabeth was, however, avenged for this desertion and ingratitude by the regrets of those who knew her best, when they became competent judges of the prince to whom they paid such sedulous and indelicate attentions; and, when too late, it was discovered how great a prize had been lost when she ceased to sway the sceptre.* Meanwhile, Cecil and most of her approved and veteran counsellors were in secret correspondence with James, exalting his merits in his own eyes, — a very unnecessary labour, — and seeking to depreciate the merits of their expiring sovereign.† Even her godson, Sir John Harrington, thought it not unseemly to lavish his ingenuity upon a new-year's gift, presented by him to James at Christmas, in the year 1602, consisting of a dark lantern made of four metals, with a crown of pure gold on the top, and within a silver shield, to give reflection to the light, on one side of which was the sun, the moon, and seven stars; the whole explained by the inscription, borrowed, with no very scrupulous taste, from the words of the poor thief who was crucified with our Lord and Saviour, — "Lord,

* Nugæ Antiquæ, vol. i. See Letter from Sir R. Cecil to ———.

† Camden. Osborn.

remember me when I come into thy kingdom!"* But Harrington, although favoured by James, learned afterwards to bless the Queen's memory†, and to compare her address, practical wisdom, and clear understanding, with the awkward conceit, prejudice, and mixture of learning and folly, which characterized her successor.

Whilst the Queen declined daily, ambitious persons of every denomination flocked into Scotland, both by sea and land, to pay their adorations to the northern luminary who was soon to enlighten this nether hemisphere. Even Cecil, who had been as prompt as any of his contemporaries in endeavouring to secure his own footing with James, thought it not beneath him to deceive his royal mistress with a contemptible falsehood, when surprised one day by the arrival of a packet from Scotland whilst he was riding with Her Majesty upon Blackheath. Elizabeth, inquiring from whence the despatch came, and hearing that it was from Scotland, stopped her coach, and desired that it might be delivered. Cecil, pretending to be equally anxious, called for a knife to cut the string; but when it was opened, assured the Queen that it consisted of old musty parchments, which it would trouble Her Highness to endure. There

* Nugæ Antiquæ, p. 326. † Ibid. p. 355.

were seasons when Elizabeth's acuteness would have detected this subterfuge, and when her pride would not have submitted to this imposition; but her spirits were broken, and her mind, during her later years, had been entirely subjected to the dominion of Cecil. The messenger was dismissed, that the packet might be purified before being admitted to the royal presence; and the minister enjoyed the self-gratulation of having outwitted the monarch, whom he afterwards described as "more than a man, and (in troth) sometimes less than a woman." * Such was the address of Cecil, that, whilst cajoling Elizabeth, he conciliated James; and although, like Ralegh and Harrington, he was, to use the words of the latter, "nearly lost upon the coast of Essex," he contrived to avoid all the evils which accrued to Ralegh from the death of the unfortunate Earl. To what extent he contributed to the mischief which afterwards ensued to those who co-operated with him in that affair, will appear, as far as history has enlightened us on the subject. Meanwhile, he contrived to adopt that policy by which his own preservation was secured. Cecil had all the narrowness of an ambitious statesman; his father, with equal discretion, would have pursued a more upright course in securing

* Nujæ Antiquæ, 345. Letter from Cecil to Harrington.

the same ends, than his artful and able son deemed it expedient to adopt.

But all necessity for subterfuge, as far as Elizabeth was concerned, was shortly to be at an end; and those, who for motives of private interest, or of public opinion, desired to see James upon her throne, were soon gratified by the fulfilment of their wishes. In the beginning of March, a heaviness, with a frowardness common in old age, an indifference to food, and a dislike to any subject but that which excited religious reflections, intimated that her days were fast hastening to a close. In this extremity, her faithful servant, the Lord Howard of Effingham, shared her confidence to the last, and continued in his assiduous attendance on her. To him, and to the Archbishop of Canterbury, she chiefly addressed her conversation; and to the latter she named, as her successor, James of Scotland. This was a point which had long been insisted upon by Cecil, who was emboldened, by the absence of all competition in the Queen's favour, to tell her that "too many years had been already lapsed, and the people's quiet hazarded by her delay in not fixing upon one certain successor."* Thus urged on all hands, the Queen, in her last moments, declared, "that her throne had been the

* Osborn's Memoirs of Queen Elizabeth. See his Works, 1682; p. 398.

throne of kings, and that her kinsman the king of Scots should succeed her." *

Her thoughts were then wholly fixed in prayer, and her last words declared that her mind "was wholly fixed on God, nor did it wander from him." Immediately after her death, the neighbourhood of the metropolis was almost deserted by the higher classes; the great families of the north hastened to their country-seats to proffer their hospitality to the king on his journey; whilst those who had not the means of showing him in this manner their loyalty and devotion, repaired to York, there to await the arrival of James the First of England.

* Camden, 385.

CHAP. IV.

ACCESSION OF JAMES. — INTRIGUES AGAINST RALEGH. — MEDIATION OF THE EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND. — CHARACTER OF CECIL: — OF JAMES. — HIS FIRST INTERVIEW WITH RALEGH. — CAUSES OF RALEGH'S DISGRACE. — ACTS OF OPPRESSION ON THE PART OF JAMES. — MEMORIAL ADDRESSED BY RALEGH TO THE KING. — REASON ASSIGNED BY JAMES FOR HIS DISLIKE TO RALEGH. — STATE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. — PARTICULARS OF THE CONSPIRACY, COMMONLY CALLED "RALEGH'S PLOT." — ARABELLA STUART — BROOK — COBHAM — GREY. — EXAMINATIONS OF COBHAM AND RALEGH: — THEIR COMMITTAL TO THE TOWER. — RALEGH'S ATTEMPT AT SUICIDE: — HIS TRIAL. — CHARACTER OF COKE. — THE TRIAL AND FATE OF THE OTHER CONSPIRATORS. — OBSERVATIONS UPON THE DEGREE OF BLAME TO BE ATTACHED TO RALEGH.

Sir Roger Aston, many years the messenger between Elizabeth and James the Sixth of Scotland, on coming to London to desire that all things should be made ready for the reception of James, after his accession to the throne of England, addressed the Council in these words: — "Even, my Lords, like a poor man wandering forty years in a wilderness and barren soil, am I now arrived at the land of promise." Such were

the prevailing sentiments of the Scots; but, with respect to Ralegh, the case was essentially different, and sudden was the vicissitude which befell him on the accession of James to the throne. Busy machinations had been for some time at work previous to the death of Elizabeth. Already had Cecil, in a correspondence which still remains in witness of his duplicity*, justified himself in the sight of James for all past events in which he had borne a part. The arts of the minister were seconded by the powerful interest of Sir George Hume, afterwards Earl of Dunbar, whose influence over James was sufficient to induce him to pardon in Cecil his concern in the death of Essex, a crime which he never forgave in Ralegh. †

This endeavour on the part of Cecil to extricate himself from blame, by casting imputations upon his former friend and associate, was, indeed, controverted by Henry Percy, the accomplished Earl of Northumberland, the intimate friend of Ralegh, and brother to Sir Charles Percy, who was among those who were fortunate enough to bear the first news of Elizabeth's death to James. ‡ Unhappily, the impressions on the King's mind were too indelibly fixed to be eradicated by this generous mediation. Northumberland, with a boldness

* In the Hatfield collection.

† Weldon's Court and Character of James I., p. 10, 11.

‡ Birch's Memoirs of P. Henry. Ed. 1756. p. 25.

unusual in those days, and with a display of ability which would have done him honour at any time, attempted to correct in James the false notion that Essex had been the firm and uniform partizan of the Scottish succession, and that the enemies of Essex had been opposed to that natural, and evidently unalterable, arrangement. After showing that Essex had "worn the crown of England in his heart for many years," and was, therefore, little disposed to place it on the head of James, the Earl proceeded to discuss the loyalty of Ralegh, and of Cobham, under whose names were comprehended a numerous party. With regard to Cobham, he declared his inability to express an opinion; and he discarded the subject of that nobleman's intentions as comparatively unimportant, or as interwoven with those of Ralegh, by whom Cobham was generally supposed to be wholly guided in all his concerns. Of the latter, he spoke, however, with a degree of confidence, not rendered suspicious by any vehement panegyric, and established by an acquaintance of sixteen years. "I must needs affirm," said this manly supporter of the calumniated and oppressed, "Ralegh's late allowance of your right; and although I know him insolent, extremely heated, and a man that desires to seem to be able to sway all men's fancies, all men's courses, and a man that out of himself, when

your time shall come, will never be able to do you much good nor harm, yet I must needs confess what I know, that there is excellent good parts of nature in him; a man whose love is disadvantageous to me in some sort, which I cherish rather out of constancy than policy, and one whom I wish your Majesty not to lose, because I would not that one hair of a man's head should be against you, that might be for you." *

But the generous advocate of Ralegh was, even at this very time, himself endangered by the arts of Cecil, on whose friendship he placed a fallacious reliance, the good offices of the secretary not being extended to save him from fifteen years of imprisonment in the Tower, and a fine of 30,000*l.*, upon a slight suspicion of being concerned in the gunpowder plot. † At the accession of James, the Earl was viewed by Cecil as favouring Ralegh, and was consequently the subject of the minister's base and hidden arts to injure him in the estimation of the King, and to effect his ruin.

The character of Cecil appeared, on a cursory view, but indifferently calculated to ensure the favour of the new king; and every ungenerous method which artifice could supply was there-

* Miss Aikin's Memoirs of James I., vol. i. p. 58., from the Hatfield Collection; and Wilson's Life of King James, p. 720.

† Camden's Annals of James, p. 642.

fore considered doubly essential, in order to retain the situations in the state which the secretary now held. In estimating the chances which a candidate for royal approval might possess, it was necessary in this reign to place the advantages of person first, from the importance assigned to them by James. The childish partiality which this monarch afterwards bestowed upon Car and on Villiers, could never therefore be lavished upon Cecil, who was not only inferior to those noblemen in external attractions, but below the common standard of personal favour, being deformed, though of a pleasing countenance. But Cecil, although called by one of his contemporaries "Robert the Devil," was described by another as "carrying on his little crooked body a head-piece of much content," possessing a quick and lively eye, a placid countenance, and, what was still better, displaying in his familiar conversation those charms of manner and deportment which bespeak a character apparently sincere and open, mild and yet decided. He had the gift of oratory; and though esteemed by Ralegh an indifferent writer, his letters are easy, animated, and descriptive. But whilst endowed with talents which counterbalanced his defects of person, the opinions of Cecil, both in politics and in religion, were, on the accession of James, opposed to the favourite notions of the sovereign. He had a strong bias

to the doctrines of the puritans, whom James detested; and was an enemy to the Spanish ascendancy, which James secretly favoured, and afterwards openly countenanced. But the able minister well knew how to keep these obnoxious principles of action in apparent subordination, whilst he recommended himself to the confidence of James by the most submissive demeanour, by his alacrity in proclaiming the King's title immediately upon the death of Elizabeth, and still more, as their intercourse proceeded, by his address in discovering plots, of which the king sent him what he considered as the first surmise and intelligence. On this account the King honoured him with the name of "Little Beagle*;" an appellation far more precious, in the opinion of James, than that of warrior or conqueror.† An assiduous man of business, Cecil had little time or inclination for those literary attainments, which however James might extol, he could not view in Ralegh without a dread of being surpassed. In his offices of state, Cecil merited however the regard of his master by a faithful and diligent service; and was, as a contemporary writer expresses it, "as good a minister as James would let him be;" securing at the same time his own interests.

* Grainger's Biog. — Art. *Cecil.*

† See Sir William Coke's Apology, in Collectanea Curiosa, by Gutch.

Thus, whilst the Scots who accompanied James to England were said to have had the "shell" of all public honours and emoluments, Cecil is supposed to have retained the "kernel" to himself.

It is difficult to enter into the motives which actuated this wary and disingenuous courtier in his immediate desertion of Ralegh, and in his intrigues to effect the ruin of his former friend. Cecil had, on a former occasion, excused Ralegh to Elizabeth in terms creditable to his own candour and discrimination.* Yet it appears that the whole machinery of court cabals and artifice was set into play immediately after the death of the Queen, and that the favourable reception of Cecil with the King, and the disgrace of Ralegh, were almost coeval. The effect of these operations was not at first perceived by their unfortunate object: he was received, and for some weeks treated graciously by the King, whom he met at Theobald's. Within this princely mansion, the residence of Cecil, the officers of state and the privy council had also been awaiting, with impatient curiosity, to behold the Monarch in whose favour the hopes of the ambitious were now centered †; and here, so mag-

* See Appendix C. Letter transmitted from the State Paper Office, in which Cecil's good wishes towards Ralegh at that time were obviously expressed.

† Oldys, p. 148.

nificent an entertainment was prepared for the new sovereign, that Lord Bacon declares that to attempt to describe it were to imitate "geographers that set a little round O for a mighty province." * To the splendour of the scene, James added the joys which a lavish extension of honours and privileges is supposed to impart. He made, indeed, shortly after his accession, no fewer than twenty-eight knights; so that a contemporary writer sarcastically observes, "creations brake in upon us like a deluge; knights swarmed in every corner; the sword ranged about; men bowed in obedience to it, more in peace than in war." † In the midst of this overflowing prosperity to others, Ralegh perhaps perceived, with some anxiety, the slight probability of even moderate success as a courtier, which appeared to await him with the singular monarch whom he now for the first time beheld.

The qualities which Sir Walter Ralegh had evinced, were calculated to ensure the approbation of an enlightened monarch like Elizabeth, conscious of her own power, confident of the affections of her people, and possessed of address and discrimination, which enabled her to employ with advantage in her subjects that busy ambition, and those active talents which might, under

* Bacon's Letters.

† Wilson's Life of James, I. p. 664.

a feebler government, become derogatory, and even dangerous to the royal dignity. But James, who has been wittily said to "have been the wisest fool in Christendom*," saw, in the splendid military talents of Ralegh, nothing but a fearful source of disturbance to that peaceful tenour of life, for the inclination to which this king has been unduly satirized; whilst, in the acknowledged fame of Ralegh's genius, he dreaded an eclipse of that reputation for learning which the monarch had endeavoured to send before him, and which he desired to shine unrivalled in the English Court, and out of an impertinent emulation, according to Osborne, "was thought to affect Sir Walter Ralegh the less because of the great repute which followed him for his excellent pen."†

A single interview was almost decisive of Ralegh's fate. Unluckily for the amusement of succeeding generations, there remains no memorial of the impression which the appearance and behaviour of the Scottish monarch conveyed to the acute mind of the accomplished courtier to whom James, for the first time, stood revealed in all his native peculiarity. His sentiments on the occasion may be easily conjectured. A strange contrast was indeed presented to the majestic and fearless Elizabeth, in her timid, undignified, and ill-favoured successor. In his

* Weldon, p. 173. † Osborne, p. 431.

mode of speech, a circumstance which perhaps even more than personal appearance first engages the attention of an observer, James retained in its fullest and harshest tones that northern dialect, in the practice of which he had been nurtured; and to this characteristic was added a difficulty of utterance which rendered those uncourtly accents still more displeasing from the natural defect of the tongue being too large for the mouth. In the management of this really unruly member, he possessed but little discretion; and, contrary to the habits of most men in important stations, was, as Lord Bacon describes him, "in speech of business short, in speech of discourse large." The same author sums up the general deportment of James, when he declares him to be a prince, "the furthest from vain glory that may be;" for, contrary to the custom of the monarchs of the Tudor line, this King, although estimating the adornments of dress to an absurd extent in others, in his own person despised or rather dreaded the expenditure of costly attire, retained the same fashions, and wore his clothes even to rags.*

Thus his natural or habitual awkwardness, a circular walk, and a custom or necessity of

* When presented by some person with roses for his shoes, he asked if they meant to make him a ruff-footed dove? One yard of sixpenny riband served that turn. Weldon, p. 106.

supporting himself upon the shoulders of others, appeared in undisguised ungainliness to the amused and critical courtiers, who, if we may judge by the accounts of contemporary writers, were not unsparing of their remarks. But that which most offended the politeness of the proud nobility, was a practice in which the king indulged of rolling his large eyes after every stranger, so that many persons could not withstand the impulse of shame and indignation, and left his presence abruptly, and in a state of irritation.*

Such was the exterior of King James the First, and an intimate acquaintance with the dispositions of this monarch confirmed the notion of eccentricity which his appearance denoted. His character was a continuity of contradictions; and to his bad government, and erroneous principles of action, may be referred many of the evils which ensued in the reign of his son.† Unable, from natural candour, to falsify or even to disguise his sentiments in common discourse, James could break the faith he had pledged to his parliaments almost without a pang; and whilst he showed the deepest contrition, remem-

* It is said by that historical gossip, Aubrey, that James's first address to Ralegh was couched in these elegant terms, "On my soul, mon, I have heard *Rawly* of thee." See Oxford ed. of Ralegh's Works, I. p. 740.

† Osborn, p. 472.

bering, even with tears, his occasional lapses into intoxication at Buckingham's jovial suppers*, could sacrifice the life of an eminent subject almost without the shadow of reluctance. Assuming to himself the character of Rex Pacificus, but inclined to peace more from fear than for conscience' sake, James appears to deserve little credit for cherishing the comforts, and protecting the safety of his subjects, if his patronage of the murderer of Overbury be considered; and lightly are the mercies of a monarch to be prized, when his delight in discovering plots and treasons was almost proverbial; so that on the blood being drawn from his finger by the carver at dinner, he was ironically said to have cried out treason, and his word in that respect was thought to be no slander.† Thus agitated perpetually by frivolous concerns, and often groundless fears, and regardless of the great interests and of the real dangers of his country, the mind of James is justly described to have been a "magazine for trifles," in which there was little space for the deposit of graver and more valuable materials; and, in the total absence of that quick perception of propriety which experience in the ways of mankind cannot always teach, and "which thirty-five years of what he called king's craft had not taught him‡," the childish

* Weldon, p. 167. † Oldys, p 148. ‡ Aikin.

points of this monarch's character were continually allowed to escape from behind the veil with which ceremony and royal dignity are calculated to conceal the peculiarities of native character.

Addicted to changing his ministers, and fond of the little intrigues incident to such occasions, James was now disposed to remain firm to Cecil from the advice which that eminent person gave to make peace with Spain.* The same reasons actuated him also to pursue a very different course with Ralegh, who had lately written a memorial in order to point out the disadvantages of a treaty with that country.† It was, in short, scarcely possible for any circumstances to be combined under an aspect more unpropitious to Ralegh, than those in which James ascended the throne. Surrounded by Scotsmen, whom he soon found reason to designate "locusts," James displayed so glaring and gross a partiality to the interests of the country which he had left, that he began to be considered as no better than a "king-in-law‡" to his new possessions on the southern side of the Tweed. Hence the fame of Ralegh's exploits, the hope of his future services, the honour resulting to this country from the spirit of enterprize which he had promoted, all availed

* Lodge's Illustrations, vol. iii. p. 181.
† Birch, vol. i. p. 48.
‡ Osborne's Trad. Mem. p. 472.

but little in the sight of a prince who regarded these meritorious traits with the cold indifference of a stranger. But had the King been more alive to the rare qualities of Ralegh's character, or more sensible of the benefits of his example, one circumstance alone would have obliterated the result of all these considerations. This was the suggestion made by Ralegh, in conjunction with the Lord Cobham, Sir John Fortescue, and others, that James should, before his coronation, be obliged to subscribe to certain articles, and that the number of his countrymen in situations here should be restrained within due bounds.*

Regardless, or unconscious of the state of the King's private sentiments, and of the fact that all the other courtiers had been silenced on the same subject, either by a knowledge of the avowed wishes of the King, or by the potency of Spanish gold, Ralegh, at his first audience with a monarch, who wore his doublets quilted for fear, and when he dubbed a knight, averted his head from the weapon which denoted the honour, addressed to him a counsel which might have shaken a far more courageous spirit than that of James. "I offered His Majesty," says he, in the work entitled his Remains, "at my uncle Carew's, to carry two thousand men to invade the Spanish without the King's charge.†" This rash, but manly and disinterested offer, at once consigned the whole

* Oldys, p. 148. † Remains, 12mo. 1726.

ascendency in royal favour to Cecil, and to the Spanish party. The presents, received from Ralegh in Scotland, were, indeed, acknowledged by the King; but that act of grace was the last ever accorded to him, and Cecil, who well knew that force alone could oblige Ralegh to succumb to his greater influence, triumphed undisturbed and secure. The source of Cecil's apprehensions, the object of James's dislike, and the victim of the Spanish faction, a pretext was now only wanting to complete the ruin for which machinations were already in progress.

An act of oppression, such as would, in the present day, make the country ring with clamour, soon intimated to Ralegh the perilous situation in which he stood. One source of James's jealousy of Ralegh originated in his guardianship of a female descendant of the Plantagenets, an heiress named Basset, who was thought by some persons to have a claim to the crown of England, and who had the more substantial possession of an estate worth three thousand a year.* This young person was betrothed to Walter Ralegh, the eldest son of Sir Walter, a brave young man, who was afterwards killed in the expedition to Guiana. Notwithstanding this contract, James, of whom it has been falsely said that he never committed but one act of tyranny, severed the affianced lady from the family among whom she had been fostered, and obliged her to marry

* Oldys, 149.

Henry Howard, who afterwards died. She then became the wife of the Earl of Newcastle; and this nobleman entertained so strong a sense of the injustice of her separation from Walter Ralegh, that he was heard to say that had that unfortunate young man been alive, he would not have married his countess, for "he took her, before God, to be young Ralegh's wife, whilst they were yet children." Nor did this unjust proceeding end here: Sir Robert Basset, a relative of the heiress, was obliged to fly the country to save his life, probably for some opposition to this transaction: his estate was much reduced, no fewer than thirty manors being sold by the King's orders.*

Fresh insults soon convinced the unfortunate Ralegh that his affairs at court were desperate. Whilst forbidden himself to enter the royal presence, he had the mortification of hearing that the Earl of Southampton, who was concerned in the conspiracy of Essex, and "long covered with the ashes of his ruin," ‡ had been sent for from the Tower, and graciously received. Irritated by these events, and incapable of sustaining with temper the reverses presented to him, Ralegh, enraged against Cecil and his party, gave, by his rash conduct, a full effect to the

* Observations on Sanderson's History of Mary Queen of Scots and her son James the Sixth, 4to. 1656. p. 12.

† Wilson, 642.

snares prepared for him by his enemies. Had he, with more subtlety or with more prudence, bent beneath the storm, or awaited its subsiding in seclusion and submission, his liberty might have been spared to him, and, perhaps, his fortunes retrieved. He adopted, however, a different course, and, employing his powerful talents in composing a justification of his conduct, addressed to King James a memorial, in which he sought to vindicate himself from the death of Essex, and to throw the blame of that affair upon Cecil. Not contented with this defence, he attacked the minister upon the score of Queen Mary's execution, which he attributed wholly to the enmity of the Cecils, and not to the wishes of Elizabeth; concluding this document by an appeal to Davison, the secretary, who was still alive, and in prison.* He was removed from his situation as captain of the guard, and that office conferred upon Sir Thomas Erskine, one of the King's countrymen and favourites. He was apprized that James disliked his continuance in his office of wines; and he found that his services at court were regarded as unwelcome and intrusive.† No impression upon the mind of James was effected by his representations against

* The only share which Ralegh had in the condemnation of Mary, was his serving in the parliament which met before that event. — *Camden.*

† Oldys, 151.

Cecil, and the minister was rendered implacable. That the conduct of the King towards Ralegh was actuated by some fatal influence rather than by the impulse of his own unbiassed feelings, is, however obvious; for when asked, what fault he found in Ralegh? the embarrassed royal pedagogue could only reply, that he had spoken irreverently of Henry VIII.; a reason which, if available as an excuse, must have been called up at the moment, since no one had declaimed in harsher terms against that monarch than James himself.* The fact was, that James, although secretly afraid of Ralegh, and disliking his opinions, left this and all other points of policy to the sole guidance of those ministers who had served under his able and experienced predecessor; and "dedicated," as Osborn relates, "rainy weather to his standish, and fair to his hounds, or any thing else that owned the voice of pleasure, which was through the whole series of his government more acceptable than any profit or conveniency [that] might accrue to his people." † So great, indeed, was the ascendency which Cecil retained over him, that he was generally thought to have made a private compact with Hume Earl of Dunbar, and afterwards Chancellor of the Exchequer, to divide the favour of the King between them ‡; thus

* Osborn, edit. 1682. p. 431. † Hume.
‡ Lodge's Illustrations, iii. 181.

cementing interests which, if divided, might have been comparatively powerless.

This brief detail of the various circumstances which attended the accession of James, is necessary to show how far domestic affairs affected the welfare and security of Ralegh's existence; the situation of England with respect to foreign states had also a considerable influence upon the destiny of this great but unfortunate individual.

James was at this time solicited with proposals of peace by all the principal potentates of Europe. Among the different ambassadors who visited this country, none, however, seemed so likely to secure the confidence of the public mind, as Rosni, afterwards Duc de Sully. This celebrated friend and minister of Henry IV. came to England expressly to frustrate a scheme for a general peace, at that time diligently sought by Count D'Aremberg, the Austrian ambassador. On his arrival in England, the French ambassador found James but little disposed to favour the proposals of Henry IV. for the continuance of the amity which had subsisted between the King of France and Elizabeth. All grateful recollections of that princess, every respectful tribute to her memory, were almost prohibited in the court of her successor; and when Rosni intimated to some of the English, that it was his intention to appear before James with himself and his whole suite in mourning, he was earnestly

admonished not, by such a form, which had been strictly enjoined him by Henry, to incur James's certain displeasure.*

The divisions of the English court, the weakness of its ruler, the overwhelming influence of the Scots, and the deep duplicity of Cecil, whom he describes as "all mystery," were soon apparent to the discernment and experience of Sully, already intimately acquainted with the character of the English nation. Suspicion, jealousy, private, and even public discontents, pervaded the higher classes of the community, and divided the responsible advisers of the King into factions. Below the principal parties was a subordinate cabal, composed of those who mingled in affairs without having any connection with the members of the government, and who were scarcely united among themselves, nor according in any one point, except in the resolution not to join with any other faction. These were composed entirely of Englishmen; they breathed a spirit of sedition †, and were ready, according to the opinion of Sully, "to attempt any thing in favour of novelties, even if it were against the king himself." ‡ At the head of this combination were the earls of Northumberland, Southampton, and Cumberland, the Lord Cobham, Sir Walter Ralegh, Sir Griffin Mark-

* Sully's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 145.

† Sully, 131. ‡ Ibid.

ham, and many others.* It may be readily conceived how the contending interests of these two parties, the vacillations of James, and the skilful manœuvres of Cecil, who veered about with each prevailing faction, afforded but too seductive an occasion for the designing, the discontented, or the rash, to form schemes for the destruction of a government, of which even the earliest prognostications were those of error and of weakness.

In this state of affairs, various circumstances contributed to make the scale of James's inclinations preponderate in favour of the Spanish interests, and consequently against the object of Rosni's mission. He bore, in the first place, no great affection towards Henry the Fourth, who had called him in derision, "Captain of arts, and Clerk of arms," a too apt designation, of which James had been maliciously apprized.† He was indolent to excess, and was but too happy to resign the burden of thinking about state matters to Cecil, who had now so far relaxed from his antipathy to Spain, as to consider that kingdom and France as both equally dangerous; above all, the King was intimidated, rather than influenced, by his queen, Anne of Denmark, over whom he sought vainly to assume an authority which had the mere semblance of conjugal command, and which that bold, assuming, and popular princess

* Sully, 131. † Ibid.

set at defiance with an undaunted assurance. Anne was wholly devoted to the Spanish alliance, and she had sedulously endeavoured to inspire the young prince Henry, the heir-apparent, with similar sentiments; but that well-judging and single-hearted youth could never be brought to coincide with his mother in her opinions on this subject, and was the more reluctant to join in her schemes from his enthusiastic admiration for the King of France, whom he proposed to make his model. * These prepossessions on the part of the youthful heir-apparent, inclined him afterwards to listen to the suggestions of Ralegh, and were, probably, the first bond of that union which subsequently subsisted between these two individuals.

Rosni, on establishing himself in London, found there, as ambassadors, the Count D'Aremberg, from the Arch-duke of Austria, Prince Henry of Nassau, and other deputies from the the States General. These ambassadors were soon plunged into the mysterious and perplexing business of negotiations, in which the irresolution and indifference of James were, according to the representations of the ambassador, only exceeded by his dissimulation. His great wit consisted in inspiring all who had audience of him with hopes, but fulfilling none of his promises; a line of conduct which had, as he affirmed, procured him security when king of Scotland. † It has been

* Sully, 135. † Sully, p. 143.

well remarked, that the attention of this monarch had been too long centered in the anxieties for self-preservation to leave much matter within him for generous exertion. *

All these conflicting circumstances were of vital, and, as they proved, of fatal importance to Ralegh. Those who admired his talents, and wished well to one who was so calculated to advance the credit of his country, viewed with regret the dangers by which he was threatened at this crisis. Even Sir John Harrington, now no longer the light-hearted and sportive courtier, but the mournful observer of this world's inconstancy †, began to fear for Ralegh, and to whisper strange plots of which he had private intimations. By this strange compound of sentiment and humour, it was plainly seen, and good-naturedly lamented, that Ralegh was obnoxious to all factions. "The Spanishe," says he, in a letter to Dr. Still, "beare no good wyll to Ralegh; and I doubt if some of the Englyshe have muche better affectione towarde hym: God delyver me from these desygns. I have spoken with Carewe concerninge the matter; he thynketh ill of certaine people whome I knowe, and wisheth he coud gaine knowledge and further inspection hereof. Cecil doth beare no love to Raleghe, as you well understande in the matter of

* Aikin's James I. vol. i. p. 59. † Nugæ, 181. 343.

Essex. I wist not he that (Ralegh) hath evyll design in pointe of faithe or relygion. As he hath ofte discoursede to me wyth moch learnynge, wysdom, and freedom, I knowe he dothe somewhat dyffer in opynyon from some others: but I thinke also his hearte is welle fixed in every honeste thynge, as farre as I can looke into hym. He seemeth wondrouslie fitted, bothe by art and nature to serve the state, especiallie as he is versede in foreign matters, his skyll therein being alwaies estimable and praiseworthie." * * * "In good trothe, I pitie his state, and doubte the dyce not fairely thrown, if his lyfe be the losing stake: but hereof enowe, as it becomethe not a poore countrye knyghte to look from the plow-handle into policie and privacie." * Such were some of the forebodings of a spectator concerning the termination of Ralegh's tranquillity, and the perils which threatened his reputation: and such the tribute of well-grounded encomium paid to him by one who knew well how to satirize his failings; and whose present favour with King James might have made that appear, for his own peculiar interests, the wiser part.

It was at this juncture that a combination was formed, so singular in its nature, and so mysterious in its intention, that its operations have proverbially been called a "riddle of state." Among the active, and enthusiastic, and malig-

* Nugæ, 343.

nant spirits who were thus mingled together in strange association, the name of Ralegh, unhappily for him, appears. The imputed object of the plot in which he was supposed to have engaged, was to alter the succession to the crown; the means, a rash and wild scheme for surprising the king and his court, and placing the next heir upon the throne. The object, or rather the victim, of this conspiracy, was Arabella Stuart, one of the most hapless members of a family sufficiently remarkable for misfortunes, and distinguished no less for the pride, imprudence, and accomplishments which characterized the house of Stuart, than for her exalted birth. The daughter of the Earl of Lenox, uncle to the king, and brother of the ill-fated Darnley, the Lady Arabella possessed, according to the opinion of some, an advantage, by birth within the realm, which raised her claim to the crown to an equality with that of James, "according to the principle of law which excludes aliens from inheritance" * to the crown. Her pretensions were countenanced by the pope, Clement VIII., who believed her to be secretly of the Catholic faith, and projected a marriage between her and the Cardinal Farnese, brother to the Duke of Parma. † But Arabella manifested neither any decided inclination to popery, nor a

* Hallam's Constitutional Hist. of England, i. p. 390.

† Hallam, 391.

disposition, by an alliance with foreign states, to strengthen her power of laying claim to her supposed birthright. Her chief grounds of complaint appear to have been the loss of her patrimonial property, when James, after the death of her father, revoked the infeoffment of the Earldom of Lenox to her prejudice, an act which had incensed Queen Elizabeth. * She was, therefore, in a great measure, dependent upon James's bounty, and was obliged from poverty to contract debts, which the king in one instance paid, besides adding to her yearly allowance.† As this act of liberality took place after the conspiracy ‡ which bore her name as its plea, it may be presumed, as indeed it was generally allowed, that Arabella was innocent of any participation in that wild and wicked scheme. That she was destined to fall a sacrifice to the suspicions raised by this affair, was too well proved; when, following the dictates of her heart, she, some years afterwards, married her cousin, Sir William Seymour, and endeavoured to fly with him abroad. He, a man of honour and of valour, who afterwards proved his attachment to the reigning family during the period of the rebellion §, was, for a time, confined in the Tower.

* Camden, p. 461., also Ellis's Letters, 2d Series, vol. iii. pp. 61—64.

† Winwood's Memorials, iii. p. 117.

‡ Ibid.

§ Clarendon.

But the misery of their common imprudence fell, as it usually does, most heavily on the lady. After years of confinement and of hope of liberty deferred, she died insane, and a prisoner.*

With the expressed purpose of vindicating the rights of Arabella, but with the secret expectation each of benefiting his own particular views, a set of men came into co-operation with such dissimilar opinions and motives, that posterity has scarcely ceased wondering at their conjunction. Amongst these, the most responsible for all the evils which ensued was George Brooke, a brother of the Lord Cobham, and, doubtless, the incendiary of the whole plot. Whilst, from the greater importance of his relative in rank and wealth, this base instrument of destruction to Ralegh has been overlooked by historians, there can be little doubt but that by his cultivated, and vigorous, but unprincipled mind, the passions of Cobham were inflamed; and the latter, who "was but one remove from a fool†," initiated into the mysteries of the web woven by others. It is remarkable that the father of these two men had given them a lesson in treachery, by disclosing the particulars of the conspiracy in which the Duke of Norfolk was concerned, in the reign of Elizabeth. This nobleman afterwards became lord chamberlain, and enjoyed so great a portion of Elizabeth's favour, that none dared to utter a

* Winwood. † Weldon.

syllable to his prejudice, unless it were the Earl of Essex; and when the office of baron of the cinque ports became vacant, the chance of the younger Cobham appeared to prevail above that of all other competitors.* With the advantages of high birth and of a large fortune, Henry Lord Cobham was as much despised by his contemporaries, even in his days of prosperity, as he has since been contemned and detested by every reader of history, capable of feeling virtuous indignation. To his natural imbecility there was an accompaniment not very unusual, a degree of stupid and remorseless assurance, which enabled him to tell a lie with as much ease and confidence as a fact†: hence he was generally conceived to be one upon whom any base office might be thrust, without the dread of any relenting emotions of conscience intervening to arrest the progress of his iniquities. If one odious and contemptible feature predominated in his composition, it was cowardice, a circumstance of which his designing associates knew well how to avail themselves when occasion offered. It was remarkable that a person so valiant, so philosophical, and so discerning as Ralegh should have associated on terms of intimacy with a character so unworthy of his regard, and so debased in the public opinion, as that of Cobham; for even

* Brydges's Extinct Peerage, 261. from Rowland White.

† Weldon.

during the life-time of Essex, Cobham had been despised, and it was the custom of the unfortunate Devereux to call him, *par excellentiam*, "the sycophant," in the very presence of Elizabeth.* Perhaps their common enmity to that unfortunate nobleman first engaged Ralegh and Cobham in a friendship which was as fatal to the former, as it was hollow and selfish in the latter. Perhaps the influence and credit attached to the dominion which Ralegh exercised over a man of Cobham's great possessions, gratified his vanity, or increased his power. It is scarcely possible that the intimacy which subsisted between them could have arisen in Ralegh from motives of regard or esteem to a man so infinitely his inferior in every thing but the adventitious circumstances of birth and fortune: yet the familiar letters which passed between them † seem to imply a degree of flattering attention on the part of Ralegh, which, if it did not proceed from kindly feelings, was utterly unworthy of a man of his intellect and estimation in society. Yet it is but too true that their intercourse, both personally and by correspondence, was of the most familiar and confidential character; and of the letters preserved of Ralegh's writing in the State Paper Office, those to Cobham are written in the terms of intimate friendship and respect. When

* Reliquiæ Wottoniæ, 31.

† Copied from the State Paper Office, App. D. & E.

quitting the examination-room, and returning as a prisoner to his own house, Ralegh received a message from Cobham requesting to know what had transpired. To this enquiry Ralegh sent a written answer, telling Cobham, that he had been examined, and that "he had cleared him of all." This intelligence was transmitted by Captain Keymis, one of Ralegh's devoted adherents, who, as it was stated, added a verbal message, which was denied by Ralegh, importing that "Cobham might be of good comfort, for that one witness would not condemn him."

Contrasted with Cobham in every mental attribute, but unhappily associated with him in deeds of folly and of mischief, was the young, high-minded Lord Grey de Wilton, described by a contemporary writer * as "a very hopeful gentleman, blasted in the bud." This unfortunate nobleman, the last male heir of a brave and illustrious line, and ancestor, by his sister, to the present house of Wilton, had been engaged in the service of his country against the Armada, and had borne an honourable character, until his ill-advised connection with that strange enterprize, afterwards vulgarly known by "Ralegh's Plot," and, by more accurate persons, "Watson's conspiracy." A puritan in religion, Grey manifested in his deportment the ostentation of

* Weldon Ostein, Trad. Mem. J. 441.

piety, and contempt of death, usually manifested by persons of that sect, to whom it appeared in many instances far more easy to die with heroism, than to live in a rational state of peace, and whom King James not inaptly described to be "Protestants flayed out of their wits." He was also a man of some classical acquirements, which were displayed with considerable ostentation in his letters, as some of his affecting and high-spirited compositions still preserved sufficiently show.* With these differing characters were joined William Watson, and William Clerk, two priests; Sir Griffin Markham, Bartholomew Brooksby, Anthony Copley, Sir Edward Parham, and, as report asserted, Sir Walter Ralegh.

Of this strange medley of characters, Grey was the most infatuated and violent; Cobham the most contemptible; and his brother, George Brooke, by far the most able, designing, and dangerous. So much doubt still rests upon the share which Ralegh had in this treasonable combination of papists with puritans, that he ought not to be regarded as decidedly forming one of this singular groupe. Yet historians have unhesitatingly connected his name with those of his reputed confederates, and have seemed to consider his guilt as implied, without the necessity of a doubt. Even Osborn, with every apparent intention to be lenient, states, that at the

* See Appendix, F. & G.

King's "assumption, the Lord Grey, Lord Cobham, and Sir Walter Ralegh," fell into a treason similar to that of Essex, and equally "improbable to hurt others, or benefit themselves:" and he adds this remark,—"that if ever folly was capable of the title, or pity due to innocence, theirs might claim so large a share, as not possible to be too highly condemned, or too slightly punished." * By an historian, greatly superior to Osborn †, the participation of Ralegh in the criminal designs of Grey, Cobham, and the other members of the party, has been mentioned as a circumstance to be accounted for by the manifestations of James's displeasure towards him, and as a fact not requiring investigation, nor challenging dispute. ‡

Mr. Hume has justly observed, regarding this affair, that "every thing remains still mysterious, and history can give us no clue to unravel it." In documents § discovered long since Hume's time, no fresh disclosures, which might establish the guilt of Ralegh, are to be found. The minds of those who conversed with him appear to have

* Osborn Mem. K. J. vii. 425.

† Osborn, as a contemporary writer, has had considerable stress placed upon his statements. He was born in 1589, and must have been fifteen years old at the time of Watson's conspiracy. His dislike to James and to the Stuarts is well known, and it was manifested by the share which he took in the civil wars.

‡ Wilson, 662.

§ Those in the State Paper Office.

been in the same state of vague suspicion and perplexity as our own; no confession was elicited from him, nor any connected evidence of co-operation traced. The origin of the charges against him originated in the following circumstances, respecting which reports prevailed, without, however, any certain foundation.

It was in the first instance supposed, and it has been repeatedly asserted, that Ralegh was guilty in tampering with the foreign ambassadors, and in offering them the benefit of his talents and influence for pecuniary considerations. Rosni is said first to have received these unworthy proposals *; but no such statement being found in the valuable and singularly accurate Memoirs of that great statesman, it may be presumed that this account was false; for Sully would scarcely have passed over such an occurrence, had it really taken place. The sole reference which he makes to any communications of importance offered to him by Ralegh and Cobham, relates to the machinations of Spain to detach England from France and the Low Countries; and, on this subject, the earl of Northumberland, who was in no way concerned in Watson's plot, gave him a far greater portion of information than the two former individuals. †

* Hume.

† Sully's Memoirs, Translation, vol. iii. p. 164. London, 1819.

It was next reported, that Ralegh and Cobham were implicated with Count Aremberg, the ambassador from the Archduke of Austria, and that their dealings with him, if not absolutely of a treasonable nature, might be regarded as disgraceful to themselves, and as dangerous to the state.

In the month of May, 1603, Ralegh had projected, if not executed, a work, which he presented soon afterwards to James*, written expressly to discourage the prospect of a peace with Spain, and urging the continuance of amity with the Flemings, upon the grounds that "a poor neighbour's house set on fire is better to be guarded than a great city afar off."† In the course of June, in the same year, the Austrian ambassador landed in England. Soon after his arrival, Lord Cobham, who had formerly maintained some intercourse with the Austrian government, by means of Laurencie, an Antwerp merchant, renewed his previous communication with that person, who attended D'Aremberg to England, and, in his presence, had a personal interview with the Austrian minister. On this occasion Cobham was instructed by the Austrian minister to offer a bribe to Ralegh, in order to induce him to relinquish that opposition to the peace with Spain, which he had continually ma-

* Birch, pp. 48, 49. † Oldys.

nifested, and which he had shewn explicitly in his recent publication. On quitting D'Aremberg, Cobham repaired to Durham House, in the Strand, where Ralegh then resided, and communicated to him, during supper, the particulars of his visit to D'Aremberg.

This was not the first proposal of this nature which had been made to Ralegh on the part of D'Aremberg, who had tried his ground with Sir Walter, by a similar offer before his landing in England. * The result of this particular negotiation does not appear, and it was probably anticipated by the proceedings against Ralegh: the treaty was afterwards stated to have been of a treasonable nature, although no different object to that which has been assigned to it could be ascertained. It may be justly remarked, that it argues no great estimation of Ralegh's incorruptible probity, that such a proposition should have been made to him. Unhappily such transactions were far too frequent in those days to be matters of reproof, or sources of shame, when discovered. Bribes were unblushingly offered, and greedily received; and the use of Spanish gold among British statesmen was, in the reign of James I., almost proverbial. The negotiation was denied neither by Cobham, nor by Ralegh.

Upon this incident, which could have no relation to the plot which was immediately after-

* Oldys, 151.

wards disclosed, the substance of all that can with a shadow of justice be urged against Ralegh's conduct as a loyal subject, entirely and solely depends.

It was in the beginning of July that Cecil received, from Anthony Copley, the particulars of a conspiracy, of which Copley avowed himself to be a party concerned. The intelligence conveyed by this man, affected only Grey and George Brooke, disclosing, on their part, a plot to seize the King's person, and other treasonable designs.* On receiving this intimation, the experienced minister immediately conjectured, that if Brooke were a principal, it was not unlikely that Cobham might also be concerned in the affair; from Cobham, it was again natural to refer to Ralegh, because, besides the well-known incapacity of the wretched peer to any bold undertaking, it was notorious that Ralegh possessed the greatest possible influence over the small degree of mind which Cobham possessed; an influence so strong that Brooke, in remarking upon it during the trial which afterwards took place, called Ralegh, emphatically, "the witch." †

Actuated by these suspicions, Cecil determined upon the apprehension of the supposed conspirators; and meeting Ralegh on the ter-

* Birch, i. 50.

† Trial in Pref. to Hist. World, p. 15.

race at Windsor, he desired him, as from the King, to remain, alleging that the lords of the privy council had something upon which they wished to communicate with him.* He was then examined upon the grounds of Cobham's communications with Aremberg; but he entirely cleared the accused nobleman of any "correspondence that might not be warranted;" referring Cecil to Laurencie for a fuller explanation; a counsel which he subsequently repeated in a letter to the minister.† Cobham was then summoned to appear before the lords at Richmond; and here, after for some time refusing to depose any thing at all‡, he entirely exculpated Ralegh, and endeavoured to exonerate himself. But soon, the whole train of affairs was changed, by an artifice eternally disgraceful to men of education and character, who were concerned in a solemn investigation touching the lives and reputations of others. A portion of Ralegh's letter to Cecil was shown to Cobham, who was led, from some expressions concerning Laurencie and D'Aremberg, to infer that Ralegh, in the remaining portion of the document, had betrayed him. On reading these passages, the wretched nobleman, conscious

* Cecil's Evidence in the Trial. See Cobbett's State Trials, vol. ii. p. 13.

† See Trial, p. 18.

‡ Oldys, 154, from the arraignment of Sir W. R. in Sherley's life.

of his own nefarious dealings, and seized with a sudden impulse, almost diabolical in its nature, exclaimed, "Oh! traitor; oh! villain; now will I confess the whole truth!" This burst of passion was succeeded by an avowal, or rather fabrication, which was but too eagerly received by the assembled enemies of the unfortunate Ralegh. Under the impressions of cowardice, and the excitement of revenge, Cobham declared that it had been his intention to go into Spain for the purpose of borrowing the sum of one thousand crowns from Philip the Third, to pay the rebellious troops which were to be raised in this country. He also detailed a plan of returning to England by Jersey, where Ralegh, in his official situation as governor of that Island, would be ready to discuss with him the mode of distribution of the money. His deposition was interspersed with many oaths and exclamations, and it was crowned by a protest, most earnestly desired by many of the bystanders, that at the instigation of Ralegh solely had he entered into these treasonable designs. *

With regard to other plots, this mean and dastardly betrayer of his friend, with a degree of cunning worthy of his selfish character, declared his inability to give any distinct account of them, although they had, he affirmed, frequently been the subjects of discourse

* See Trial.

between him and Ralegh: an unlimited field was thus left to the accusations of the malignant, and to the attachment of any imputation which might chance, from other coincidences, to have the appearance of probability. With the inconsistency of falsehood, Cobham, to his other allegations, added this strange and contradictory surmise, that he dreaded lest, on his return to Jersey, Ralegh should deliver him and the money he was desired to bring to the king.* After delivering this evidence, which, incoherent and improbable as it was, decided the fate of Ralegh, Cobham was discharged; but, even before he came to the stair foot to depart from the council room, he was seized with sudden remorse: he retracted his assertion, and confessed that he had injured his former associate and friend.† He refused, for a long time, to subscribe to his iniquitous testimony, which was taken down in writing, and could not be persuaded to do so, even after reading that letter of Ralegh's which had so much enraged him, until Popham, the lord chief justice, being sent for, told him, that it would be considered as a contempt of court, if he did not sign his deposition. Neither could he be induced to confirm the truth of an allegation which had been made by his brother Brooke, on his examination, that Cobham had remarked to

* Oldys, from Sherley, p.153. † Trial.

Brooke that he and Grey were only upon the "bye," but that Ralegh and himself were upon the "main." This statement, on the part of Brooke, a known enemy of Ralegh, was also explained by him to refer to the destruction of the King and his issue; a plot which was considered as being the "main" or chief end of the conspiracy, whilst the "bye" was supposed to refer to some amendments in state affairs, said to be desired by the other conspirators. Yet, notwithstanding this denial on the part of Cobham, this point was afterwards much insisted upon, and, during the trial, was made the pretext of imputing the chief guilt in the affair to Ralegh. Thus, as it were, prejudged, and almost condemned by anticipation, Ralegh was indicted at Staines, in Middlesex, on the 21st of September, and Cobham and Grey in the course of the three following days. They were then committed to the Tower.*

Upon the grounds of Sir Walter Ralegh's commitment to prison, Cecil, recently created Baron Essenden, has explained himself in a letter to Sir Thomas Parry, at that time ambassador in France. With all his ingenuity and his love for the discovery of plots, the able secretary was unable to give any satisfactory reasons for this proceeding. "Concerning Sir Walter Ralegh's

* Stowe's Annals, fol. 83.

commitment," he observes, " this hath been the ground. He hath been discontented in *conspectu omnium* ever since the King came; and yet, for those offices which are taken from him, the King gave him 300*l.* a-year during his life, and forgave him a good arrearage of debts." He then narrates the examinations before the council, which, in the eye of justice, had been sufficiently refuted by the vacillating conduct of Cobham, his contradictions, and his violent, but too late repentance*; and not being able to deduce from the vague accusations of Cobham the desired evidence of Ralegh's guilt, remarks that " his governing the Lord Cobham's spirit, made great suspicions that in these treasons he had his part." Such were the surmises upon which the brave, the wise, and the virtuous were too often consigned to unmerited disgrace and confinement in the boasted days of our ancestors.

Since the former friendship between Ralegh and Cecil, and the apparent reluctance of the latter to aid the prosecution of Ralegh upon his trial, may be considered as tending to confirm his guilt, it is proper here to remark that recent investigations† appear to show more fully than has heretofore been manifested, that dissensions

* Cayley, i. p. 384., from Pepys's Library in Magdalen College, Cambridge.

† In the State Paper Office.

between these two eminent men had commenced even during the preceding reign, and had been disclosed to Cobham. In the postscript to a letter addressed to that nobleman, Ralegh speaks with bitterness of Cecil's conduct to him in a certain law-suit, and designating the secretary by the sarcastic appellation of "my Lord Puritan Periam," denounces wrath against him in severe terms.* If professions of regard could, on the one hand, be so readily changed into contempt and anger, it is not very probable that they were very sincere, or stable, on the part of Cecil, whose worldly interest it appeared to be to forsake even this hollow semblance of friendship towards Ralegh, on the accession of James. Cecil, indeed, seems to have made no exertion to save any of the prisoners from their doom; and conscious of the insufficiency of the evidence against Ralegh in an equitable point of view, he displays in his letters a desire to expatiate upon the circumstantial bearings of the case, and a disposition to seize hold of every incident to confirm conjectures of his guilt. Under the mask of impartiality, and with seeming hesitation, he labours to convince his correspondents at foreign courts of Ralegh's guilt, without directly expressing his entire conviction of it himself. Nothing can be more artful, more essentially diplomatic, than these

* See Appendix, G.

dispatches *: yet truth will assert her power, and few calm and unprejudiced spectators were readily convinced of Ralegh's co-operation in the wild schemes imputed to him.

It is melancholy to learn that the fortitude of Ralegh deserted him at this crisis. The mind which could afterwards so nobly rally to support misfortune, sank beneath unexpected disgrace. That he attempted suicide, is a fact over which the Christian mourns in the bitterness of disappointment. The fatal blow was arrested by the merciful interposition of that pitying Providence, who willed that he should live to retrieve the errors of an useful, but not faultless career.

Ralegh, at this period of his life, displayed a proud and impatient spirit: adversity was almost entirely new to him, and her salutary lessons had been experienced in a slight and transitory manner. The season was yet to arrive in which this great, but erring man, was enabled to show, how, from degradation, he could raise himself to glory, by the duties of submission and repentance, and by the wisdom of resignation.

His despair must have been extreme, and it was unhappily construed into an admission of his guilt. For although, from the account of Cecil, he was on his commitment treated with humanity, and at first lodged and attended as well as in

* See his two letters to Sir T. Parry in Cayley, vol. i. p. 284. and ii. 5., also his letters in Winwood, vol. ii. p. 8.

his own house *, he could not suppress the agonies of his mind; and one afternoon, whilst the secretary and others were examining some of the prisoners in the Tower, he stabbed himself in the breast, near his heart, with a knife. When Cecil, on being informed of this attempt at self-destruction, came to him, he found him in great mental distress, "protesting his innocency, with carelessness of life." That his indifference to life was real, is obvious from his subsequent conduct at his trial, when he appeared far more anxious to vindicate his character, and to manifest the malice of his enemies, than to obtain their mediation for his forgiveness. Perhaps there are few men who can weigh the prospect of a long imprisonment with that of a speedy release by death, who would not, in the first agonies of such a prospect, be tempted to take their fate into their own hands, forgetful of their reliance upon that Supreme Providence under whose protection we may presume the innocent captive peculiarly to abide.

Happily for mankind, happily for himself, the wound which Ralegh inflicted was not dangerous, being, as Cecil describes it, rather "a cut than a stab." † The rash and criminal deed

* Cayley, i. 365.

† This attempt on the part of Ralegh is established by Cecil's Letters and by his Diary, preserved in the Hatfield library, first brought to light by Cayley, vol. ii. 366. It is confirmed by a letter in the State Paper Office, now first printed in the Appendix, and alluding to the cure of the wound.

was committed on the twenty-seventh of July, 1603. By a letter from the lieutenant of the Tower, dated the thirtieth of the same month, he seems to have been almost restored to health, although still greatly agitated in mind.* "Sir Walter Ralegh's hurte," says the writer, addressing himself to Cecil, "wyll be within these two days perfectly hoole. He doth styll contynewe perplexed as you leffte hym." From the same source we learn, that he greatly desired to be allowed the society of his friend Herriot; but we are not informed whether his request was granted.

With regard to the private examinations which were carried on between the interval of his first committal and his trial, Ralegh appears to have adopted a very different course to that pursued by the other prisoners. In a letter addressed to Cecil by Sir William Wade, and indorsed with the words "to me" in the hand of the secretary himself†, it appears, that Ralegh at first preserved a resolute silence, which he at length relaxed, although with much caution; "and I doubt not," observes Wade, "havinge now opened the hatche of his closet, he will losse reserve, and be more willing to utter that is behind." Previous to this intelligence, which was sent to Cecil on the 27th of August, nothing

* See Appendix H.

† Appendix I.

had been elicited from Ralegh, nor does it appear, from any source, that he subsequently confirmed the expectations of Wade, by disclosing any thing of importance. His declarations, and those of his attendant Keymis, were taken *, and sent to Cecil in Sir Walter's own hand-writing. These, unluckily, have not been transmitted to us in any manuscript collections, or have not been yet discovered. They, probably, contained asseverations of innocence, and were, perhaps, on that account, destroyed by Cecil. There was, evidently, considerable pains taken to win from him some admission of his guilt, and had such been obtained, we should, no doubt, have been furnished by explicit and perhaps triumphant remarks upon it from the pen of Wade, who was indefatigable in his investigation of the prisoners. † On the contrary, Cecil, in his letter to Sir Ralph Winwood, then ambassador at the Hague, declares that Ralegh was firm in his asseverations of innocence. And yet, unshaken by this fact, or else determined to believe him guilty, he makes this invidious remark upon the circumstance, "that though Sir Walter persists in his denials, by having gotten some intelligence of the Lord Cobham's retractation, yet the first

* See Appendix, I. & K.

† Such is the general tenour of the letters in the State Paper Office, from Wade to Cecil. Nothing was, however, elicited from Ralegh.

accusation is so well fortified with other demonstrative circumstances, and the retractation so blemished by the discovery of that intelligence which they had, as few men can conceive it comes from a pure heart."

The consistent asseverations of Ralegh were strongly contrasted with the confessions, prevarications, and supplications of his fellow-prisoners. Grey, in his "declaration," as it was called, confessed that he had a "plot, a party, and confederates."* He further acknowledged, that the object of this scheme was to surprise the King and his court.† And he scorned not to address letters to the King, two of which are still extant‡; and probably several to Cecil, to one of which we have the secretary's answer. § These addresses were written with the high bearing of an English peer, who insisted upon his services, and those of his ancestors, as claims to mercy, rather than on his own innocence. They were penned with some ostentation of learning, which might, one would think, have aroused the sympathy of James; but it is evident from Cecil's cautious, yet apparently kind reply, that the fate of this misguided but high-minded young nobleman was already determined.

* See Appendix, I. & K.

† Winwood's Mem., vol. ii. p. 8.

‡ In the State Paper Office, Appendix, L. & M.

§ Appendix, O.

Cobham attempted no new retractation of his confession, but resigned himself to the deepest depression of which his mean and selfish soul was susceptible, and adopted those humble terms of supplication which the basest craving for the boon of life could suggest. In the documents in the State Paper Office, so repeatedly referred to, his spirits are said to be "exceding muche declyned, he is growne passionate in lamentacion and sorrowe; his only hope is in his Majestei's mercye, and Lord Cecil's mediation." Meanwhile he addressed a letter to the Earls of Nottingham and Suffolk, and to Lord Cecil, praying for their mediation, in a mode which was extremely characteristic of his own base nature, and of the corruptions of the times, which emboldened him to hint to these three exalted personages, that the "lowness of his estate prevented his being able to promise them any requital of their favours." * In this letter, he humbly sued for a private interview with those noblemen, to whom he promised "to disclose that which he had revealed to no other living creature." This seems to have been a last desperate attempt to obtain mercy; for the truly abject composition was penned so late as October, about a month before the trials of the conspirators were to commence. Brooke, who, with Cobham, acknow-

* Appendix, P.

ledged the treasonable correspondence with Spain *, confessed also, to the fullest extent, as much as Grey, and was declared by Wade "to be before, and not behind the rest, as well in ample declaration as in time." From his evidence, it was collected that Sir Walter Ralegh was "ordinarily twiess a week with the Lord Cobham, but what their conferencies were, none but themselves doe knowe. But Mr. Brooke confidently thinketh, that what his brother knows, was known to y^e^ other." † This, as far as can be at present traced, was all the testimony given in the Tower which could possibly criminate Ralegh; and how little, in our more impartial and enlightened times, should we think of such unsupported and indefinite allegations! Like Grey and Cobham, Brooke addressed a petition to Cecil, whom he endeavoured to move by an allusion to his own sister, the deceased wife of Cecil, to whom he was thus closely allied by marriage. The letter, like those of his fellow delinquents, is extremely characteristic, and shows both the ability and acuteness of this designing but accomplished man: for Brooke was far superior to Cobham in talents, acquirements, and courage, although resembling his despicable relative in his unprincipled conduct. He is supposed to

* Winwood, ii. p. 8.

† See Letters from State Paper Office, Appendix, L.

have stimulated Cobham to the selfish and dangerous schemes which they had contemplated in concert with Markham, Watson, Clerk, and the rest of the confederates.

After Sir Walter had been examined by Lord Henry Howard, Lord Wotton, and Sir Edward Coke, he addressed to the Earls of Nottingham, Suffolk, and Devonshire, and to Lord Cecil, a letter full of eloquent protestations of innocence, and of sound argument.* This he followed with a supplication to the King, to whom he represented that it was one office of a just and merciful prince to hear the complaints of his vassals, and especially of such as were in misery."† These addresses, as it may be presumed, failed to propitiate those who were predetermined against him.

Hopeless of mercy, and resting his chance of security upon the almost equally fallacious expectations of justice, Ralegh, as the time appointed for his trial drew near, became extremely anxious to obtain from Cobham that justification which his innocence, as he affirmed, demanded. Availing himself one evening of the absence of the lieutenant of the Tower at supper, he bribed a poor man to throw up into Cobham's apartment an apple, to which a letter was fastened. In this commu-

* See Ralegh's Remains. † Birch, ii. 377.

nication, Ralegh entreated Cobham " for God's sake to do him justice in his answer, and signify to him that he had wronged him in his accusation." To this request Cobham returned a reply, which, not being quite so explicit as Ralegh desired, he sent another letter to Cobham, similar in effect to the former; to this, although he required no answer, but merely expressed his desire that Cobham would declare his innocence at the trial, an emphatic assurance was returned, declaring Ralegh, in the most solemn terms, guiltless of all the charges. *

The plague was at this time raging in England, and, although the King and Queen, almost in defiance of its power, had been crowned at Westminster, yet little public business could now be transacted in the metropolis. Whilst a general panic pervaded all classes on account of this direful infection, it is remarkable that the unhappy prisoners in the Tower were peculiarly exempt from its influence; only one man, a porter in this edifice, being attacked with it, and dying from its cruel effects.† This might be some consolation at a time when diseased persons were rushing out of the towns into the

* Overbury's Copy of Sir W. Ralegh's Confession, p. 5. ed. 1648.

† As it appears by a letter in the State Paper Office from Sir William Wade to Cecil, dated August 31st, 1603, from which also the following observations on the plague are taken.

adjacent villages, and dying in barns and stables, into which the poor despairing wretches cast themselves, heedless of the dissemination of that infection by which they were themselves the sufferers. Such was the state of anarchy produced by this public calamity, that constables could not be found who would, under any penalty, convey the infected persons to the pest-house. The bedding, straw, and clothes of those who had died of this frightful distemper were cast into the streets, and thus contagion borne on every breeze of wind, and hasty travellers and passengers endangered by these contaminated articles. The cages and watch-houses in London and the suburbs were filled with the dying, and even the offices of burial could with difficulty be procured. In this awful visitation, the Mayor and aldermen, and the justices, deserted the city, and left it to its wretched fate, without a project for relief and prevention.* The courts of law, after removing from place to place, and infecting many towns with the disorder, were held at Winchester, whither Ralegh and his companions were now removed for their several trials. On the tenth of September he was conveyed, in his own coach, first to Bagshot in Surrey, and thence two days afterwards to Winchester Castle. Such was the extreme, and almost unaccountable, popular aversion to this great man, that, as he travelled, he was followed by the

execrations of the people through London and the other towns; and tobacco-pipes, stones, and mud thrown into his coach.* To these cruel insults he paid not the slightest notice, nor accorded the honour of his resentment. Regarding these ebullitions as the indications of a malignant faction, working upon the minds of the base and ignorant, he viewed them with a calm and almost cheerful countenance, nor suffered a murmur to escape him; yet his personal danger must have been great, from the account which Sir William Wade transmitted to Cecil shortly after the arrival of the prisoners at Winchester. "I thanke God," says the conductor of this important charge, "we brought all our prisoners safely hither yesterday night in good tyme; and yet I protest to your Lordship, it was hab or nab whether Sir Walter Rawley should have bin brought a live thorow such multitudes of unruly people as did exclaym against hym. He that had seen it would not think there had bin any sicknes in London; we toke the best order we could, in setting watches thorow all the streets, both in London and in the suburbs: if one hair brain fellow amongst so great multitudes had begunn to set upon him, as they were verry nere to do it, no nit-watch or meanns could have prevayled, the fury and tumult of the people was so

* Lodge's Illustrations Hist. iii. 417.

great."* The time was, however, approaching, when these sentiments of detestation were to be changed into those of compassion, respect, and admiration.

* See Appendix, Q. Letter from Wade to Cecil, dated Aug. 31. 1603.

CHAP. V.

TRIAL OF RALEGH. — CHARACTER OF SIR EDWARD COKE. — AFFAIR OF THE LADY ARABELLA. — CONDUCT AND SENTENCE OF THE PRISONERS.

On the seventeenth day of the month, the trial of Ralegh came on, before Lord Cecil, now Earl of Salisbury, the Earl of Suffolk, Lord Chamberlain, the Earl of Devonshire, Lord Henry Howard, Lord Wotton, Sir John Stanhope, Vice Chamberlain, Popham, Lord Chief Justice, Anderson, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, Sir William Wade, and two judges, Warburton and Gaudy. Several amongst these individuals had already been employed to examine Ralegh, and to investigate the whole affair. It is remarkable that nothing to his disadvantage had been as yet elicited. In the correspondence in the State Paper Office, there occurs, indeed, the following observation, from the pen of Sir William Wade, addressed, as usual, to Cecil; but it is wholly unexplained and ambiguous: — "It may please your good lordship, by my Lord Henry Howard, I was bold to troble your lordship with the short collection of these last labors, which have gretly intangled Sir Walter Rawley, or rather disclosed him from

his covert; and also discovered that depthe of malice in my Lord Cobham's purposes, as to me seeme very strange."

The jury, consisting of an equal number of knights, esquires, and gentlemen, were not personally known to Ralegh, and, it was reported, had been changed even the night before, the foreman, and one or two individuals who had been first chosen, having been old and favourite servants of Queen Elizabeth, and therefore not likely to prove so ready to convict one who had also enjoyed the confidence of that princess, as those whose chief object was to obtain the favour of the reigning monarch.*

After the usual forms had been passed, the indictment was read, and Sir Walter pleaded "Not guilty." The general tenour of the charges amounted to this effect: that he had conspired to deprive the king of his government, to raise up sedition, to introduce the Romish religion, and to procure foreign enemies to invade the kingdom.† The indictment then entered into the supposed particulars of this plot, which were derived from the confessions of Cobham and Brooke. He was also charged with having composed a book against the king's title, and instigated Arabella to write three letters;

* Observations on Sanderson's History of Mary Queen of Scots and her Son. Pag. 8. 4to. 1656.

† Cobbett's State Trials, vol. ii. p. 1.

one to the King of Spain, another to the Archduke of Austria, and a third to the Duke of Savoy, in order to persuade them to advance her title. The rest of the charges related to the transactions between Aremberg and Cobham, and to the agreement between that nobleman and Ralegh, that the latter should obtain eight thousand crowns of the money said to be raised on the part of Spain.

Ralegh, on being asked if he would "take exceptions to any of the jury?" replied, "I know none of them; they are all Christians and honest gentlemen: I except against none." He then requested to be allowed to answer every point particularly, as delivered, "by reason of the weakness of his memory, and sickness." Heale, the King's serjeant at law, proceeded to address the court, and, in a short, but violent speech, gave a lamentable specimen of the legal oratory of the day. A far greater display of eloquence was expected from the attorney-general, Sir Edward Coke, afterwards lord chief justice, who had recently received the order of knighthood, and had formerly enjoyed the far greater honour of being frequently consulted by Queen Elizabeth and her council in matters of state, not immediately connected with his professional duties. As nature, in dealing with Bacon, the great rival of Coke, seemed to have forgotten, among her numerous gifts to that

illustrious person, the endowment of a heart; so, in the constitution of Coke, if she had bestowed originally warmer and better dispositions, she had not guarded him with resolution sufficient to defend himself from the corruptions of the times, and from the effects of the political and professional interests in which he lived and moved. Violent and rancorous towards those whom guilt or misfortune placed beneath his iron grasp, Coke was remarkable for a paltry obsequiousness to the great and powerful, who were able to confer those temporal advantages upon which he vainly and wickedly doated. It was still fresh in the recollection of all classes, that he had pursued the earl of Essex, and his fellow prisoner, Lord Southampton, with a malignity which was the more contemptible, as it proceeded, not so much from his own personal resentment, as from his ambition to gratify the Queen, whose mingled sentiments of love and anger he seems not to have comprehended. Coke was connected with Cecil by his marriage with the secretary's sister, which, on account of its irregularity, for which the parties pleaded, it is strange to say, *ignorance of law*, had been visited with severe penalties by the church. It may be presumed, from this affinity to Cecil, that Coke was not disposed to relax from his usual line of conduct in prosecutions, from favour to Ralegh, whose bitterest enemy he had

already proved himself to be, by examining him as to what he knew of the guilt of Essex, and thus contributing to render him odious to the people. Influenced by all these considerations, this indefatiguable lawyer came to the trial of the most accomplished gentleman of England with a more than wonted preparation of gall and sarcasm on his brow; with the vehemence of party zeal, heightened by private interest; and with an habitual violence of temper, apparently aggravated by an insolent triumph in grappling with so illustrious an enemy, and by an opportunity of reducing the admired of all observers to the level of a common prisoner. Such was the impression which the deportment of Coke conveyed to all unprejudiced spectators; and, if posterity be thought to have dealt hardly with him, in condemning him for a mode, then not uncommon, of pursuing his professional duties, let it be remembered that he lost a glorious occasion of showing forbearance and impartiality to a persecuted individual; of paying a tribute to the merit and talents of the unhappy prisoner, even whilst he reprobated, as they the more enhanced, the danger of his imputed crimes; or, if such a line of conduct were deemed incompatible with the severe exercise of his legal functions, decency and humanity might have guarded the fallen foe at least from insult. But Coke was blinded by a gross selfishness, which

could only in subsequent disgrace and misfortune give place to more liberal and philanthropic views. The illustrious Bacon, at a later period, addressed to him this reproof: — "As in your pleadings you were wont to insult over misery, and to inveigh bitterly at the persons, which bred you many enemies, whose poison yet swelleth, and the effects now appear, so you are still wont to be a little careless in this point; to praise or disgrace upon slight grounds, and that sometimes untruly, so that your reproofs for the most part are neglected or contemned; when the censure of a judge, coming slow, but sure, should be a brand to the guilty, and a crown to the virtuous."

The attorney-general began his harangue with a declaration, too soon proved to be fallacious, that nothing but plain evidence should condemn "the prisoner." "He rang changes upon the different modes and degrees of mischief, subdividing its import into "imitation, supportation, and defence;" he gave a summary of the principal charges, comparing the several plots to Sampson's foxes, "which were joined in the tails, although their heads were severed." He declared it to be the intention of the conspirators to make Watson lord chancellor, Brook lord treasurer, Markham secretary, and Grey earl marshal. He dealt in nice definitions, and in laboured, puzzling disquisitions, interspersed

with much law, some learning, and no small portion of flattery to the king. He described treason as in the heart, the hand, the mouth, and in consummation; comparing that *in corde* to the root of a tree; *in ore*, to the bud; *in manu*, to the blossom; and that *in consummatione*, to the fruit. After this display of oratory, he showed how little he was restrained by a sense of justice, either in his assertions or in his examinations, for, on some questions being asked by Ralegh, he broke out into the exclamation, "I will prove you the notoriousest traitor that ever came to the bar." This coarse and even brutal mode of address was succeeded by a torrent of invective, in which the learned counsel laboured to cast upon Ralegh, as the ablest individual of the conspiracy, the swordsman, and penman of the group, "the very head and front of the offences." Since no evidence could possibly be brought of Ralegh's personal co-operation in the conspiracy to seize the King, he was stated to have been guilty of participation in the plots of Markham and Brook, by *imitation;* but, on his requiring the proof of this allegation, he was called by Coke; a "monster having an English face, but a Spanish heart," and forbidden to speak, until the interference of Cecil produced greater moderation. A long speech was, however, endured, containing such interpolations of abuse as the following: "the most horrible prac-

tices that ever came out of the bottomless pit of the lowest hell;" "You are the absolutest traitor that ever was;" "Thou traitor, thou viper;"* to all of which Ralegh, with calm dignity, replied, "that he would wash his hands of the indictment, and die a true man to the King." The deposition of Lord Cobham was then read. This had been solemnly retracted; yet it constituted the material evidence upon which the case for the prosecution rested. † Ralegh's confession was also produced; the whole purport of which was, that he had been offered by Cobham 8000 crowns if he would further the peace between Spain and England; a proposal to which he replied, "When I see the money, I will tell you more;" "for he thought it was one of Cobham's ordinary idle conceits, and, therefore, made no account thereof." ‡ After many circumlocutions, and much perversion of the evidence, which consisted, in general, of little but a recapitulation of that which had already transpired upon the previous examinations, Ralegh rose to make his defence. With the clearness of

* Coke is supposed to have excited the well-merited satire of Shakspeare by these effusions of passion, or manœuvres of interest; and our great poet is thought to allude to this memorable scene, when, in Twelfth Night, Sir Toby, giving Sir Andrew directions to challenge Viola, says to him, "If thou *thou'st* him twice, it may not be amiss."

† Trial.

‡ Lodge's Illustrations, vol. iii. note 217.

well arranged mind, he exposed the illegal nature of the testimony upon which his fate depended, which must either "condemn him, or give him life; set him free, or send his wife and children about the streets to beg their bread." He first denied having ever had the slightest concern in the succession of Arabella, to whom he had, as it appears, a personal dislike.* On the mention of her name, either at this period of the proceedings, or at some other point, attention was drawn to that lady, who, as well as the Countess of Nottingham, the Countess of Suffolk, and other ladies of distinction, was in Court†, in a gallery, with the Lord Admiral. Lord Cecil then said, "Here hath been a touch of the Lady Arabella Stuart, the King's near kinswoman; let us not scandal the innocent by confusion of speech. She is as innocent of all these things as I or any man here; only she received a letter from my Lord Cobham, to prepare her, which she laughed at, and immediately sent it to the King." The Lord Admiral then added, "The lady doth here protest upon her salvation, that she never dealt in any of these things, and so she willed me to tell the court."

Thus was this part of the indictment dismissed, but to what extent the reflections, touching the

* See Sir Dudley Carleton's Letters in Cobbett's State Trials.

† Ibid.

loyalty of Arabella, and her connection with the conspirators, were permitted to go, is not known, because all the notes of the trial relative to her were suppressed, except those relating to her justification, which are supposed to have been inadvertently published. *

Ralegh also refuted the notion of a design to borrow money from the King of Spain, whom he represented as one of the proudest, yet poorest princes of Christendom. He declared that his intimacy with Cobham originated in the management which he took in the affairs of that nobleman; and that he had, at the time of his arrest, several valuable jewels belonging to Cobham in his charge. He represented how improbable it was that Cobham should leave so much property to be confiscated, if he intended to become an outlaw, besides taking into account recent additions of considerable extent which the Earl had made to his library at Canterbury. † He declared his willingness to confess the truth of the charges against him, and to forfeit his life, if Cobham, when confronted with him, would persist in swearing to the truth of that which he had deposed; and he was seconded in his earnest petitions for the production of Cobham before the Court, by Cecil ‡, who appears alone of all the commissioners to have affected any show of

* Lodge, note, iii. 217. † Trial. ‡ Lodge.

impartiality and moderation. The Lord Chief Justice then commented upon Cobham's unwillingness to sign his deposition; and Cecil next described his own share in the apprehension of the prisoners, premising that a "former dearness between him and Ralegh had tied a firm knot of his conceit of Ralegh's virtues, now broken by a discovery of his imperfections."* This allusion to their former friendship, this reference to Ralegh's prosperous days, conveyed, perhaps, to his breast, a sting more subtle, and more keen, than the coarse and venomous revilings of Coke; but the cautious and wily remark of the once familiar friend of the unhappy prisoner was, doubtless, intended both as an apology to the King, for his previous intimacy with Ralegh, and as a justification to the public for his acquiescence in the persecution of one with whom he had taken "sweet counsel." Yet some natural tears were observed to escape from Cecil, as also from the Earl of Mar†; the selfishness of ambition not having altogether annihilated every kindlier emotion.

Meanwhile the trial proceeded, and so temperate were Ralegh's replies, so wise and so ready his refutations of all objections, that an universal sentiment of good will prevailed to-

* Trial. † Lodge, iii. 216. from the Talbot Papers.

wards him. * His arguments were ingeniously interwoven with sentences of divinity, humanity, civil law, and common law; and such was his display of legal knowledge, that he was generally reported to have studied for the bar at an early period of his life. But all his exertions were unavailing, and the greater the learning and ability which he manifested, the more were his enemies resolved to crush so dangerous a foe. In vain did he ask for common justice, in desiring that the charges should not be admitted on the evidence of one witness: "You try me," said he, "by the evidence of the Spanish inquisition if you proceed without two witnesses." Upon which he was told by Coke, that he "spoke treason." † He was informed by the lord chief justice, that the statutes of the twenty-fifth of Edward the Third, and fifth of Edward the Sixth, requiring two witnesses, were repealed, and that it was now sufficient if there were depositions under either hand, or by the testimony of witnesses, or even that it needed not the subscription of the party, so there be hands of credible men to testify the examination." ‡ Such was the perversion of a law too obviously just to need any comment. Men, who could thus act for party purposes, would soon refine away even sacred writ to countenance injustice. This des-

* Lodge. † Trial. ‡ Ibid.

titution of principle, this mournful sign of the times, was too well seen and fulfilled in the succeeding reigns, when Scripture was made the watch-word for every instance of oppression, and the barriers of moral honesty and of good faith lamentably broken. Those persons who are curious to peruse a tissue of falsehood, calumny, and contradiction, should refer to the details of that process, falsely called a trial, by which Ralegh was condemned. Vehement abuse from Coke, a sly and ingenious construction of every frivolous circumstance into a confirmation of the main charge on the part of Cecil, and a shameless departure from legal exactness in Popham and the other judges, were the characteristics of this proceeding. Happily for Ralegh, whilst his patience and ingenuity were thus painfully exercised, an opportunity was afforded to him for the explanation of every minute detail of his case. It was well observed by an eye-witness, that "he served for a whole act, and played all the parts himself." * Borne down on all sides, he appeared truly great during the whole of this scene, which lasted from eight in the morning, until seven in the evening. Humble, without servility, serious, yet not dejected, "towards the jury not fawning, nor believing, nor hoping in them," he stood before his enemies with the

* Dudley Carleton. Hardwicke State Papers, i. 397.

collected and commanding appearance of one who "rather loves life than fears death," and who seeks to rescue his name from infamy in the serenity and dignity of a blameless conscience.* All who beheld him were astonished that a man of his known spirit could brook the insults which he received, with a degree of calmness which threw the opprobrium from himself upon his opponents. Yet, although it was said, that he "seemed to cast himself for very weariness, afraid to detain the company too long," he seems to have left no effort unemployed to manifest his innocence; and such were the temper, wit, and address which he displayed, that had it not been for the sad cause of these exertions, it would have been one of the most brilliant and successful days of his life.† Repeatedly did he urge that Cobham should be produced and confronted with him, alleging that a similar privilege had been conceded even to Campion the Jesuit; but it was contested by Coke, and negatived by the Lord Chief Justice Popham, too justly and expressively called by Camden, a "censorious man," and who proved himself not to be a very wise one, by divulging the secret of the refusal in his remark, "that Cobham, to procure the acquittal of an old friend, might be moved

* Wilson, 714.

† Dudeley Carleton. Letter in Cobbett, vol. ii. p. 47.

to speak otherwise than the truth." On the part of that treacherous nobleman, two contradictory letters were produced; the one, confirming the charges, and adding to them fresh particulars; the other "declaring, upon his salvation," that Ralegh was innocent. This was the last evidence; yet the subservient jury retired for a quarter of an hour only, and returned a verdict of *guilty;* a sentence which must have been previously determined; for had a due and conscientious consideration of this case been given, it would, even by the enemies of Ralegh, have been considered as one of extreme embarrassment and difficulty. The Lord Chief Justice might well observe, in his charge, that he "had never before seen the like trial, and hoped that he should never see the like again." Ralegh, on hearing the verdict, calmly reiterated his denial of the principal charges, and hoped that the King would be informed of the wrong he had received that day from the attorney. He then declared his submission to the royal pleasure, recommending his wife, and "son of tender years, unbrought up," to his Majesty's compassion. After a long explanatory harangue from the Chief Justice, in which he told Ralegh, that his conceit "of not confessing any thing was very inhuman and wicked," the unfortunate prisoner was sentenced to be hanged, and afterwards beheaded, with all the usual, horrible, and

barbarous accompaniments, which were, in those days, thought necessary to the effective execution of the law. Sir Walter then addressed the Earl of Devonshire, and the other Lords, beseeching them, by their interest with the King, to obtain a remission of the ignominious mode of his death. This they promised *; but he is said to have procured also an interview with the Lords in private, and to have again entreated that Cobham might be produced, and might die before him; on which solemn occasion he had, he declared, no doubt but that Cobham would retract all that he had said. † He was then conducted to the castle, to which he returned, according to the account given by Sir Thomas Overbury, "with an admirable erection, and yet in such sort as a condemned man should do." ‡

It is said, that some of the jury who had condemned him, were so "touched in their consciences," as to ask his pardon on their knees §; but this is scarcely probable, since the men who gave such a verdict must either have been compelled by fear, or induced by bribery, to compromise their sense of justice: and either of these motives would have kept them silent after their decision. It has also been related of Sir Edward Coke, that when he had retired, after the trial, to

* Trial, 21. † Lodge, iii. 216.
‡ Overbury's Arraignment of Sir W. Ralegh, 25.
§ Weldon, 32.

take the air of the garden, and that intelligence was brought to him that Ralegh was convicted of treason, he felt, or affected, extreme surprise, declaring that he had himself only accused him of misprision of treason. This anecdote has been attributed to the pen of Carew, the son of Sir Walter Ralegh; but it is neither well authenticated, nor does it appear to be consistent with the conduct and expressions of the implacable lawyer during the trial. It is however possible, that Coke may have perceived that he had allowed himself too much latitude of abuse, and that he had injured himself in public estimation; since, in the words of Ralegh himself, in a letter addressed to Sir Robert Carr, "The hearing of his cause had changed enemies into friends, malice into compassion, and the minds of the greatest number then present into commiseration of his estate." * Sir Roger Aston, then in the confidential employ of the King, and the first who carried the intelligence of Ralegh's condemnation to James, affirmed, on this occasion, "that never had man spoken so well in times passed, nor would do in times to come." And his companion, a Scotchman, asserted, "that although he would, before his trial, have gone a thousand miles to see him hanged, he would, ere he parted, have gone a thousand miles to have

* Winwood's Letters.

saved his life." In short, never, according to the acknowledgment even of his enemies, was a man so much loved and so much hated, in so short a time *; and seldom, perhaps, have the advantages of moral courage, and of a well-governed spirit, been manifested more conspicuously.

A singular contrast to the admirable deportment of Ralegh was presented in the conduct of Cobham, who was next brought to play his part before the tribunal which had condemned his former friend. To the indictment he listened with fear and trembling, interrupting the charges at intervals by forswearing certain particulars, so that he immediately divulged, with the rashness of a coward, what he would affirm or deny. His doom was quickly decided; for, although he found means to implicate all his friends in the conspiracy, he could not succeed in clearing himself. He represented Ralegh as the cause of his being stirred up to discontents, and he alluded to imaginations, but would not allow any purposes of a criminal nature. † On being questioned respecting the two letters which he had written, the one condemning, and the other exculpating Ralegh, he declared that the first let-

* Sir Dudeley Carleton's Letters from the Hardwicke Papers. See Cobbett, 248.

† Dudeley Carleton.

ter was true, the latter having been gained from him by a stratagem, by young Harvey, who was the son of the lieutenant of the Tower, and was under the influence of Ralegh. The peers immediately found Cobham guilty; and it affords a strong presumptive proof in Ralegh's favour, that the abject culprit pleaded his first confession as a claim for pardon, accompanying his petition with long and persevering entreaties for life and mercy, which were peremptorily refused.

The high-minded Grey was next brought to the bar; and, although clearly convicted of a plot to seize the king's person, he redeemed, by his dauntless demeanour, the character of a British peer from the ignominy which the conduct of Cobham had brought upon his rank and station. Grey began, with great courage, to tell the lords commissioners of their duties, and kept them from eight in the morning until eight in the evening in "traverses and subterfuges." He conducted himself with the self-possession of a man, who, from a misapprehension of his duties to his country, considered himself innocent, and with the energy of one who was determined not to relinquish life without a struggle. He excused his share in the conspiracy, on the ground of his desiring to present a petition for the reformation of abuses; but the evidence of Brook and Markham were decisive against this part of his defence. The presiding lords evinced, neverthe-

less, considerable reluctance in convicting one who must have appeared to the more experienced members of their number to have been rather misguided by false principles, than instigated by criminal motives. They beheld, also, in Grey, the young companion of many of the junior members of the aristocracy, himself the representative of one of its proudest families. Long and painfully they demurred, and even his enemies dared not to utter, in open court, that which they might desire to urge in aggravation of his fault: whilst some, who deemed him guilty, "would fain have dispensed with their consciences to have shown him favour." * Yet he was also condemned; and, on being asked if he had any thing to allege why sentence of death should not be passed upon him, he replied: "I have nothing to say;" and then, after a long pause, during which, perhaps, a desire of life contended with the magnanimity of a noble nature, he added these noble and affecting words: — "and yet a word of Tacitus comes in my mind, '*non eadem omnibus decora*;' the house of the Wiltons have spent many lives in their prince's service, and Grey cannot beg his. God send the King a long and prosperous reign, and to your Lordships all honour." † The fate of the remaining conspirators excited but

* Carleton.

† Ibid. Brydges' Extinct Peerage, 75—79.

little public interest. Brooke, on his trial, pleaded a commission to try faithful subjects, but was unable to produce the document. He was executed on the fifth of November, in the castle of Winchester; and, shortly before his death, confessed to the bishop who administered to him the sacrament, that he had falsely accused Lord Cobham, his brother, and Ralegh, in ascribing to them the treasonable speeches which formed the basis of their accusations. This circumstance is related by Cecil himself in his letters, and is accompanied with a commendation of Brooke's remorse *; it has weighed much in Ralegh's favour, not only with his contemporaries, but with those who, being removed at a sufficient distance of time to judge without partiality of his cause, have deemed the very nature of the evidence sufficient to impugn the justice of his trial. "I would know," says Sir John Hales, "by what law Brooke's deposition of what the Lord Cobham had told him of the fact, was evidence against Ralegh? I would know by what statute the statutes of the 25th of Edward III., and 5th of Edward VI. are repealed." In short, this celebrated lawyer, in his work on the magistracy and government of England, pronounces the trial of Ralegh to be, on this and other grounds, very irregular throughout, the

* Winwood, ii. p. 11.

accusations against him not amounting to legal proof. *

When the proceedings relative to his own trial were finally and hopelessly closed, Ralegh, with fortitude and decency, prepared to follow the sheriff to the prison, whence he expected to issue only to close a life of activity and of vicissitude on the scaffold. In following him in imagination into the gloom of confinement, one reflection alone, in reviewing his conduct as a subject, seems likely to have disturbed the tranquillity of a conscience entirely at peace with itself. In a letter which he wrote to the King, Ralegh acknowledged, before his trial, as he had also done to Cecil and the Lords who were appointed to examine him, the only offence which could justly be laid to his charge, that of listening to the proposals made by Cobham of a bribe from Spain, although he declared that he neither believed nor approved it. † It is, indeed, to be feared, that there was some deviation from the rules of strict integrity, induced, too probably, by the temptation of turning his abilities and influence to account; for a strange contradiction existed in the character of Ralegh, who, while he freely promoted, at his own expense, the schemes which he projected for the extension of British dominion, was clear neither

* Birch, i. 60.

† Cayley's Life of Ralegh, i. 367. Also Ralegh's Remains, p. 188.

from the imputation of receiving bribes from his own countrymen, nor from the disposition to admit them from foreign states. Avarice, unguarded by a nice and delicate sense of honour, was the prevailing vice of the day; and few statesmen were, in those times, exempt from stains upon their purity of conduct, which would at present consign persons in similar stations to merited and irremediable disgrace. *

Whether engaged in mournful retrospections, or in fearful anticipations, Ralegh had not now the consolation which was afterwards afforded him in the society of his distressed and devoted wife. Although absent from him for whom she endured so much, this unfortunate lady relaxed not in her exertions to redeem from destruction the object of her earliest affections, and the pride of maturer years. Three years afterwards, when the King was in all his pomp and state, at Hampton Court, and when the revels of the gay and great were at their height, we read of the humiliated and neglected Lady Ralegh kneeling to him in behalf of her husband, but passed in silence by the Monarch. † That Ralegh estimated her affection, and appreciated the strength and elevation of her character, is evident from the tone of the eloquent and pathetic letter which

* In proof of this assertion, see note, Lodge's Ill. vol. iii. p. 286.

† Lodge, iii. 313.

it was almost his earliest care to address to her after his trial.* He wrote, indeed, in the first instance, to the King †; but finding his petitions fruitless, he now directed to his wife and to his child every wish which anxious affection could dictate. His earnest desire seems to have been, that no fruitless sorrows should diminish the power of exertion which the helpless orphan whom he expected to leave, would fully require from his surviving parent. "Let my sorrows," said he, "go into my grave with me, and be buried in the dust. And, seeing it is not the will of God that ever I shall see you more in this life, bear it patiently, and with a heart like thyself." He entreated her, not, by seclusion and fruitless sorrow, to lose the benefits of exertion; "thy mournings cannot avail me: I am but dust. Remember your poor child for his father's sake, who chose you and loved you in his happiest time." Such are, in part, the exhortations with which Ralegh sought to strengthen the resolution, and to sustain the spirits of one whom he thought soon to consign to the neglect and indifference of the world.

The death of Ralegh and of the other prisoners was now daily expected at Winchester; and, on the ninth of December, the King, at Wilton, signed the warrants for the execution of Cobham,

* See Appendix L. † See Cayley, vol. ii. p. 31.

Grey, and Sir Griffin Markham; Brooke, Clarke, Watson, and the two Priests, having previously suffered. Meanwhile the benefit of spiritual aid was afforded to the condemned men, the Bishop of Chichester being entrusted with the awful responsibility of preparing the dastard soul of Cobham for its departure from a state which he had too fondly valued.* The prelate who was deputed to this difficult office was Dr. Anthony Watson, who had been the King's almoner, and had been patronized by the Queen for his talents as a preacher. He was beloved, also, in his diocese, and bore so exemplary a character for the discharge of his duties †, that there is no reason to suppose that he would not endeavour to impress Cobham with a deep sense of his unfitness to enter upon eternity. Yet it appears to have been the chief solicitude of all who were concerned in the care of the prisoners, to induce them to suffer, without contradicting their previous testimony. Accordingly, we are told by one who was at this time at the very scene of action ‡, that the reverend prelate "found in Cobham a willingness to die, and a readiness to die well;" expressions which are further explained by the words, "with purpose at his death to affirm as much as he had said against Ralegh." It is not uncharitable to suppose that Cobham's

* Carleton's Letters, Cobbett, vol. ii. p. 51.

† Nugæ Antiquæ, ii. 187. ‡ Sir Dudeley Carleton.

spiritual guide found it far more easy to confirm him in this resolution, than to move him to emotions of penitence, or acts of justice. But Cobham was reserved to a long course of suffering, and to a prostration both of body and mind, which may possibly have elevated and chastened his grovelling soul.

The grave divine, to whose lot it fell to bring Ralegh to a contrite disclosure of his errors, and, in particular, to a confession of his alleged treasonable practices, was Doctor Thomas Bilson, Bishop of Winchester. Sir John Harrington, in describing this prelate to the young prince Henry, depicts him as "carrying prelature in his very aspect." * He rose to his eminent station solely by his learning, but adopted means to retain it, which cannot be justified, having obtained the name of "Nullity Bilson" by his subserviency in devising a nullity of the marriage between the Earl and Countess of Essex, in order to accommodate Car, Earl of Somerset, the notorious favourite of James I. † It was, probably, on account of Doctor Bilson's classical and general attainments that he was commissioned to undertake the charge of reconciling Ralegh to his doom; for the universal and just opinion of Ralegh's intellectual superiority to other men, would naturally actuate the choice of him who was appointed to

* Nugæ, 99.

† Note in Nugæ, 102.

exert a spiritual influence over his mind. Some similarity subsisted, also, between the pursuits of this divine and those of Ralegh. The reverend Doctor was not only deeply versed in philosophy and divinity, but in the less important pursuits of poetry and the dead languages.* He had formerly been master of Winchester school, and might reasonably be supposed, in his capacity of a teacher, to have looked closely into the human mind. Yet the Bishop failed in the main object of his conferences with Ralegh, whom he earnestly desired to corroborate the confessions of Cobham. He acknowledged the distinguished prisoner, indeed, to be, with regard to "his conscience, well settled, and resolved to die a Christian and a good Protestant;" but "for the point of confession, he found him so strait-laced, that he would yield to no part of Cobham's accusation; only the pension," he said, "was once mentioned, but never proceeded in." † Thus nothing more was elicited than that which had already transpired.

Whilst these operations were going on, the mind of James I. was agitated by strange alternations of feeling; a desire to preserve his dignity and consistency being counterbalanced by the vanity of appearing to act the part of mercy and forbearance, which was again

* Note in Nugæ, 101. † Sir D. Carleton's Letters.

checked by a secret dread of the powerful mind and activity of Ralegh, whom he had been skilfully instructed by Cecil to regard with apprehension; a lesson which James was, in all instances, too ready to learn, and in no haste to forget. The Lords of the council, with one accord, urged him to show mercy, and, in this beginning of his reign, to gain "the title of Clemens, as well as of Justus." The Countess of Pembroke wrote to her son, conjuring him, as he valued her blessing, to employ his own credit, and that of his friends, to ensure Sir Walter's pardon; and there were probably other persons of rank, who secretly felt an interest in his safety. But there were many individuals about the court who took a different course, and one of the King's chaplains, Patrick Galloway, disgraced his Christian profession by a discourse openly contemning remission of sins and mercy as the greatest offences against justice. James, in this early period of his reign, displayed, however, on this occasion, that jealousy of his prerogative, which arose from his consciousness that all his power rested upon the opinion of the people, over whom he had so recently assumed the reins of government. * He resolved, also, to engross, in his own person, the

* James I. Hume, 8vo. vi. 121.

full credit of the course which it was his intention to pursue. Holding himself, therefore, "upright between two waters," he took care to inform the Lords, that it in no degree became them, as judges, to press for a commutation of the sentence, which they had themselves imposed; but that they should rather desire the execution of just decrees. Having thus silenced that portion of the petitioners, the King, with a secret enjoyment of the conjectures which he was creating, intimated to all persons who presumed to advise him, that he would "move not a whit the faster for their driving;" sometimes pretending to lean to one side, sometimes to another, as whim or appearances directed.* He signed, however, the warrants for the execution of Grey, Cobham, and Markham, at Wilton, where the Court then remained; and these necessary documents were sent to the authorities at Winchester, two days previous to the morning assigned for the death of the prisoners. Until the appointed time, their doom was considered as certain, and the whole Court expected to hear that the unhappy men had suffered, until nine o'clock on the Friday morning, when the King summoned his council, and informed them that he had sent a warrant the day before to countermand the execution. To this act of

* Hardwicke State Papers, i. 377.

grace, Cecil, upon "his credit and reputation," declares "no soul living to be privy, the messenger excepted," who conveyed the royal command to Sir Benjamin Tichborne. It was extolled as a "rare and unheard-of act of clemency*," which the most enthusiastic admiration could not sufficiently commend. Such were the sentiments of the adulatory throng who alternately flattered and satirized King James; to our present improved notions of humanity and of justice, the whole proceeding seems to have been arranged with a contrivance of effect almost contemptible, and with a disregard of its impression upon the feelings of others, very nearly amounting to cruelty.

Whilst the King was receiving at Wilton encomiums upon his mercy, the unhappy prisoners at Winchester were still ignorant of the change in their prospects, a change which, by giving life, to some gave only a prolongation of misery. In pursuance of the sentence, Markham was brought to the scaffold, where "one might see in his face the very picture of sorrow†," and he much lamented his hard fate, in having been deluded with hopes of pardon, now, as he thought, proved to be groundless. Yet, with a magnanimity worthy of a better cause, he threw

* Winwood's Mem.—Letter of Cecil, vol. ii. p. 11.
† Carleton.

away a napkin, given him by some pitying hand, and refused to cover his face, saying, that he could look upon death without blushing. He then took leave of his friends, and prepared to die, first offering up his devotions, according to his own fashion. Meanwhile the King's messenger, a Scottish gentleman, and one of the grooms of the royal chamber, stepped forward, and drawing the sheriff on one side, the execution was delayed, and Markham left on the scaffold to pursue the reflections incident to his awful and singular situation. After a short interval, the sheriff returned, and informed him that he was to have a respite of two hours, in order to prepare himself more completely for death: he was led into Prince Arthur's hall, in which he was locked, and left solitary, in that state of suspence, which has justly been considered as the greatest mental torture that human nature can endure.

The Lord Grey was next conducted to the scaffold. This young nobleman had passed the time intervening between his sentence and its execution, in the exercise of those devotions, the spirit of which had enabled him to brave his fate with a magnanimous composure. Upheld, like most persons of his persuasion, by a sense of the ascendency of religious hopes over all other considerations, Grey manifested a degree of calm unconcern towards this close of his

mortal career, which might in others have been mistaken for callous indifference. It was remarked that he neither ate nor drank less, nor slept worse, than he was wont to do in happier and less momentous times. It must, indeed, have softened the sternest hearts to have beheld this last scion of a noble house approach the scaffold, surrounded by a band of young courtiers, and supported on each side by the beloved friends of his youth and prosperity. Yet, if this sight were calculated to move the pity of the beholders, the high bearing of the unfortunate Grey was certain to receive their admiration, for in his countenance there shone a gaiety and spirit which might have suited the deportment of a young and happy bridegroom.

Great compassion had been excited, and considerable interest exerted for this unfortunate nobleman, and his conduct, both at his trial and his execution, were the more admired as contrasted with that of Cobham; although, by some of the obsequious courtiers, his careless and high bearing had been termed pride and obstinacy, in compliance with the notions in those days prevalent of entire and passive obedience.* It was justly thought that he had a claim upon the King, from having been formerly engaged in the fleet against the Armada; but this circumstance, in

* Carleton.

the present disposition of James towards Spain, might be viewed in an unfavourable light. The Prince Palatine, who afterwards married the Princess Elizabeth, had entreated the King, before his departure for Bohemia, to spare the life of this young nobleman; but James, in the full dignity of his prerogative, dismissed the request with these words, "Son, when I come into Germany, I promise not to ask you for any of your prisoners." * When Grey ascended the scaffold, he was ignorant of the respite of Markham, and probably thought that his fate was inevitable. Falling upon his knees, he followed, with great devotion, but in the affected fashion of those of his persuasion, a prayer made for him by one of his attendant priests, and added another, which lasted an hour, of his own composition, for the King. When all was prepared, he was likewise told by the sheriff that the order of the execution was changed, and that the Lord Cobham was to die before him. He was then led also to Prince Arthur's hall in a state of astonishment which can scarcely be imagined, and which none would wish to experience. Cobham, who had by this time summoned a sufficient portion of courage to retrieve his former appearance, was now brought upon the stage, and so outprayed the minister, and over-acted his part,

* Brydges, 75—79.

that it was coarsely observed, "he had a good mouth in a cry, but was nothing single." He occasioned some disappointment to many of the spectators, who expected considerable diversion from the total deficiency of all manly resolution which his character and conduct implied. He asserted the truth of all that he had deposed against Ralegh, affirming all that he had said of him "upon the hope of his soul's resurrection;" and after acknowledging his offence, and praying forgiveness of the King, prepared to take his farewell, when the sheriff again interposed, and told him that he was to be confronted with some of the prisoners. Grey and Markham were then brought back to the scaffold, looking on each other "like men beheaded and met again in the next world." To close this singular scene, they were required by the sheriff to acknowledge the heinousness of their offences, the justice of their trials and sentences, to which they all assented. Then the sheriff desired them to admire the mercy of their prince, who had countermanded their executions, and given them their lives, and the streets rang with plaudits which reached even from the castle to the town, where it was echoed with similar effusions of public joy. But happy would it have been for some of these unfortunate men, had their existence been terminated on the scaffold at Winchester. The gallant and beloved Lord Grey, whom even the King

allowed to be "a noble spirited young fellow*," languished, like an imprisoned eagle in his cage, and died in the Tower in 1614. He left no heir to his estates which were sold, and divided among other families; part remaining attached to Wilton castle, part being appropriated to Guy's hospital, and a portion, probably the greater, falling into the hands of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, the favourite of King James in after times.† The career of Cobham was, to our human comprehension, in strict accordance with that sense of retributive justice which God has implanted in the mind of man. Sacrificing so much for liberty and for wealth, he continued a prisoner, and became poor; abandoning and vilifying his friend, he was himself abandoned, even to the lowest destitution, and sunk into infamy, compared to which the forgetfulness and neglect of mankind appeared almost as mercy. He was confined for many years in the Tower, and, it is said, afterwards re-examined at the request of the Queen and of Sir Walter Ralegh; when he entirely exonerated Ralegh from the charges which he had been the chief instrument of affixing to him. He survived Ralegh a few months only, living to see the web which he had once woven, again ensnare the gifted and lamented victim of his machinations. The days of Cobham were ended in a

* Carleton. † Brydges' Extinct Peerage, 75.

garret in the Minories; a miserable apartment, to which there was no access except by a ladder, and belonging to a poor woman, who had formerly been his laundress. This despised, unpitied, and deserted being, died, almost, from want of food.* Such was the termination of that life, for which he had sacrificed truth, friendship, and reputation.

Whilst the public mind had been alternately chagrined and diverted by the late proceedings, the state of astonishment and conjecture in which Ralegh learned the progress of events, can hardly be conceived. After remaining at Winchester castle for a month after his condemnation, it is natural to suppose that some hopes of mercy must have entered into his calculations of the future, to cheer that dark prospect. On the day of the solemn farce which James thought proper to permit, Ralegh was stationed at a window of his prison, where he could gather that some singular revolution in his destiny had taken place; but the meaning of the change was still a matter of wonder, and of anxious enquiry, for it was the contrivance of the King, that the boon of life should be accorded to the unhappy prisoners, after a struggle, in which the bitterness of death might be fully experienced. But the hopelessness of

* Osborne's Traditional Memoirs, King James I. ed. 1701.

confirmed imprisonment quickly returned; and Ralegh, with his companions in misfortune, was remanded to the Tower of London, there to remain during the King's pleasure.*

It was in this gloomy retirement that Ralegh experienced the true benefits of those resources which the world cannot taint with the infection of her influence; domestic affection was his consolation, philosophy his solace, literature his employment. He was re-conducted to his prison, under the guard of Sir William Wade, who had first escorted him to Winchester. Between this person and Cecil, a constant communication existed, the chief subject of which appears to have been, at this time, the condition, conduct, and pursuits of the state prisoners under the charge of Wade, but especially of those suspected of being concerned in Watson's conspiracy. We are not, from any documents, apprized whether Ralegh entertained any suspicion of Wade's fair dealing towards him; but it seems probable that the natural impetuosity of the unhappy captive's disposition prevailed over his patience, so as to render him unjust towards his keeper, for in the course of his imprisonment, the following passage is found relating to him, preserved in the Hatfield MSS. in a letter addressed by Wade to Cecil: —

* Hardwick Papers.

Aug. 17. 1603. "My Lord Treasurer and my Lord of Devonshire met at the Tower on Monday at three of the clock in the afternoon, and gave me my oath. Though Sir Walter Ralegh used some speech of his dislike of me the day before, yet sithence, he doth acknowledge his error, and seemeth to be very well satisfied."

It is possible that Ralegh may have distrusted the representations which he concluded that Wade would despatch to Cecil; for about this time, Wade, as it appears from the conclusion of a letter in the State Paper Office, addressed to Cecil, was pleading for the fulfilment of some promise which the late Queen had made to him, relative to some advantageous appointment; and that he earnestly solicited the interest of Cecil with the King, to forward this affair. It is therefore possible, and perhaps in those days of undisguised corruption, but too probable, that Wade may have thought it his interest to appear unfavourably disposed to Ralegh in the sight of Cecil, and that Ralegh may have divined this disposition to censure him on the part of his watchful keeper. In the letters from Wade to Cecil, preserved in the State Paper Office, the guilt of Ralegh is implied, and an unfavourable construction placed upon every circumstance relating to him; yet, no single circumstance is stated which could confirm the accusations against him, although it is evident

that there were the most earnest and incessant endeavours to substantiate those charges by any heedless expression which might be drawn from him. This fact, whilst it strongly argues the innocence of Ralegh, is favourable, at the same time, to the integrity of Wade's representations, and accounts, perhaps, in some measure, for the lenient measures afterwards adopted towards the unfortunate prisoner.

Some society was allowed to Ralegh, in the course of the first year after his return to the Tower; and he had the inestimable comfort, chequered probably by many bitter emotions, of receiving his wife, and then only son, within the precincts of his melancholy abode. He was allowed, also, in common with several other persons, to have access to Cobham's apartment; and several of his own former domestics, Gilbert Hawthorn, a preacher, two medical attendants, his steward of Sherborn, and one or two other individuals, were permitted to repair to him at the necessary seasons. "The door of his chamber," says Sir William Wade, "being alway open all the day long to the garden, which indeed is the only garden the lieutenant hath. And in the garden he hath converted a little hen-house to a still-house, where he doth spend his time all the day in distillations." * Thus engaged, Ralegh made

* Birch's Collections in Brit. Museum, cxxi. 4160.

sufficient progress in chemistry, to obtain, in those days, a high reputation for skill in the compounding of a valuable nostrum, called by his contemporaries his cordial, and used by the celebrated Robert Boyle with great effect.* A list of the chemical processes in which Ralegh thus occupied the tedious hours of imprisonment, and, perhaps, succeeded in obliterating painful recollections, is still in existence in manuscript †; and it might probably afford to the chemical antiquarian a curious test of the comparative progress of knowledge in that branch of philosophy, to which the most eminent men of the seventeenth century may be supposed to have advanced.

His first care, on establishing himself within that which he might reasonably expect to be his final residence, was to supply himself with such humble means of prosecuting his beloved sciences, as the indulgence of his keepers, or the remnant of his own ruined fortunes, would allow him to obtain. It may afford both instruction and encouragement to the humble and destitute labourer in the pursuit of knowledge, to learn, with what scanty materials and limited space the great Ralegh prosecuted the studies commenced in happier days.

* Aubrey's MSS. See Oxford edition of Ralegh's Works, 1829. Appendix, vol. viii.

† Ayscough's Cat. Brit. Mus. 492.

It has been lamented by an ingenious biographer of Ralegh that the anecdotes of his hours of confinement are few, and that period comparatively involved in a tantalizing obscurity.* Successive investigations have contributed but little to remedy this cause of regret; but, in the State Paper Office, a very interesting document remains, endorsed in Cecil's hand-writing, entitled "The Judgment of Sir Walter Ralegh's Case." This appears to have been a memorial addressed to the great man in power, in favour of the unhappy prisoner, and conveys such an impression of his bodily sufferings as may, it is to be hoped, have moved the heart of the prosperous minister. † From this account it seems that Ralegh was afflicted either with rheumatism or with the dire effects of incipient palsy, having been seized on the left side with an extreme coldness and numbness, and his speech impeded so that an utter loss of it was apprehended by his medical attendants. It was, therefore, recommended by Dr. Turner, one of his ordinary physicians, that Sir Walter should be removed from the cold apartment which he had hitherto occupied into a warmer apartment, that which he had built adjoining the Still House being particularly spe-

* Cayley, ii. 38.

† The original is printed now, for the first time, in the Appendix.

cified as proper for his condition and comforts This letter, to which no date is affixed, may be assigned, in all probability, to the year 1604 or 1605. No memorial has transpired to show if the indulgence requested were granted. On the contrary, but little favour appears to have been shown to Ralegh during the two or three first years of his imprisonment. By a letter recently discovered †, and addressed by him to the King, it is obvious that his feelings were insulted, his reputation injured, and his comforts abridged, in many grievous instances. The seal of the duchy of Cornwall was demanded of him, which, in compliance with the King's commands, he resigned, giving it into the hands of Lord Cecil to restore it to the sovereign. ‡ But, whilst surrendering this pledge of his high employments, Ralegh failed not to remind his Majesty that it was by the favour of his predecessor Queen Elizabeth that he had been authorized to assume the important offices which he held as Chancellor of the Duchy, and Warden of the Stannaries. He declared, in solemn terms, his faith to James, and his dependence on his mercy alone. Unhappily, he addressed himself to one too much alienated from him, and too greatly prejudiced

* Appendix, L. & M.

† Also in the State Paper Office, and now first printed in the Appendix, O. ‡ Ibid.

by the insinuations of others, to listen to his petition with any emotions of compassion. Yet, whilst at this distance of time some passages of this letter are perused, it is difficult to imagine, that James can have rejected, without some relenting, the petition of so accomplished a petitioner, who, whilst feeling that his corporeal and mental vigour declined under the pressure of his calamities, entreated the King not to keep him in restraint until "the powers both of his body and mind should be so enfeebled," that "it had been happier for him to have died long since." With a humility resulting from a spirit broken by the virulence of enemies, and by the desertion of friends, he implored the King to have compassion on him whilst he had yet "limbs and eyes" to do him service, entreating the "Lord of all power and justice to strike him with the greater misery of body and soul" if he failed in fidelity to his sovereign. Such were the affecting, and, perhaps, abject terms in which the unfortunate Ralegh endeavoured to obtain the boon of a cessation from persecution. The powerful expressions of his own pen pourtray, with a melancholy force, the dejection and dread into which he sank upon seeing the renewed attempts which were made to ruin his earthly prospects.

On finding all applications for mercy fruitless, Ralegh appears to have wisely devoted himself to those sources of consolation, of which the

injustice of men could not deprive him. The extent of his acquirements in literature and science furnished him with a fund of constant employment, in his graver hours, the appetite for knowledge, happily for human nature, "growing by what it feeds on." He had the advantage also of being able to vary his pursuits from grave to gay, and of being able to relax into amusement without the necessity of descending into frivolity. But of his favourite recreations, music and painting were probably the only resources which could be introduced into the bounded and austere enclosure of his prison limits.* The cultivation of plants, and the arrangement of a garden, in which he delighted and excelled, was precluded, or, at least, its pride and pleasure were at an end; for who can cherish the soil with which slavery is associated? Of the enjoyments of society he could taste but a very moderate portion, and even that small portion would necessarily be alloyed by the absence of comforts, by the contrast with former days, by the dread of *surveillance*, and the danger of unrestrained communication within a prison. But, although, from

* Sir Walter Ralegh was not the only member of his family who was distinguished for his musical talents. His brother Carew played upon the olpharion, an instrument somewhat resembling a lute, and sang also well. Aubrey's MSS. in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford edition of Ralegh's Works, vol. viii. p. 743.

the happiness of the free, Ralegh was precluded, he could yet avail himself of the consolations of which innocence is never destitute. Soon after
1603. the commencement of his long captivity his wife and son were permitted to join
1604. him, and in the ensuing year the birth of another son added a new member to the small and oppressed family. This child was christened Carew, probably in honour of Lord Carew, a relation, and intimate friend of Ralegh's, and afterwards an intercessor for him with the King; Carew was the only one of Sir Walter's two sons that was destined to survive him. The works which Ralegh began, and in some instances completed, were numerous, and of the most varied kind: of these, the most elaborate and remarkable is his History of the World, which he published in 1614. Of this stupendous production, whilst it has been observed by some that its "only defect (or default rather) is that it wanteth the half thereof*;" it has been thought by a far better judge† "to afford the best model of the ancient style" of composition. Never, perhaps, in our language has so copious and extended a work been composed with so little apparent difficulty to the author; and, whilst the learned have been excited to admiration by the vast stores of erudition which its pages unfold, the less enlightened reader cannot fail to rise from the

* Fuller's Worthies. † Hume.

careful perusal of its pages without his knowledge of human nature being improved and verified, and his desire for virtuous distinction stimulated. It contributes greatly to the interest of this composition, that the writer has identified himself with many of its most striking passages, in the course of its ponderous dissertations and minute details. We refer continually to the historian, whose opinions, his personal observation, his experience, and tastes, were called into active requisition in the compilation of its pages. Ralegh, in relating the actions of the warlike and the exertions of the wise, writes with the spirit of an enthusiast in the cause of virtue, and with the discrimination of a veteran in the fields of fame. Neither is his generous ardour chilled by the cold and sceptical views of religion with which some excellent authors, under the plea of philosophical moderation, have cooled down the expression of every noble sentiment. He gives nature her scope, and aims not at the fruitless task of weighing the utility of every splendid action by the mental scale which has been adopted in modern times. It is still more important to observe, that his proper appreciation of the actions of men, and his love of moral excellence, sprang from the right source. It is obvious that he must have been deeply imbued with the force and importance of religious truth, and, in the progress of his labours, had God

in all his thoughts. For this happy and truly enviable state of mind, for that elevation of the character which proceeds from a prostration of the soul to God, for that strength which arises out of weakness, Ralegh was indebted to the season of adversity which afforded him the opportunity, and impressed him with the proper spirit to execute this work. Lord Bacon, in alluding to the dangerous gifts of fortune, has beautifully remarked, that "afflictions only level those mole-hills of pride, plough the heart, and make it fit for wisdom to sow the seed, and for grace to bring forth her increase. Happy is that man, both in regard of heavenly and earthly wisdom, that is thus wounded to be cured; thus broken to be made straight; thus made acquainted with his own imperfections, that he may be perfected." *

Like many other works of value and erudition, the History of the World was, according to some accounts, neglected by the literary men of the time. Perhaps the disgrace and present obscurity of its author, the neglect of the court, or its own bulk, and in the early part, the difficulty of treating the subject in a popular manner, may have contributed to the result, which is said to have proved a source of deep mortification to Ralegh. A few days before his death, he is stated to have

* Bacon's Letter to Coke, in Stephen's edition of Bacon's Letters, 127.

sent for Walter Burre, who printed his book, and to have enquired how the work had sold? To this question he received the mortifying reply, "So slowly, that it has undone me." Upon hearing this intelligence, Sir Walter rose, and reaching from his desk a continuation of the work, threw it into the fire, saying to Burre, "The second volume shall undo no more: this ungrateful world is unworthy of it." This anecdote, although characteristic of Sir Walter Ralegh, who was naturally passionate and impetuous, rests upon no authority sufficient to stamp it as more deserving of credit than the relations which are commonly told of all eminent persons, and for the truth of which we are to rely on the particular veracity of the narrator.

In his scientific and literary pursuits Ralegh found a young and liberal patron in Prince Henry of Wales, the heir apparent to the throne. The virtues of this youth were universally extolled, and, perhaps, with greater earnestness, from the contrast which every indication of character presented to that of his well-intentioned but almost pusillanimous father. It was, however, the desire of James that his first-born should, in all important respects, resemble himself, and especially in that instinctive apprehension of plots, of which James especially boasted. In such discoveries, he prayed that the Prince "might be his heir;"

and particularly commended any detection of imposture which it was the lot of the youth to effect.*

But daily experience proves that there are some minds which rise not only superior to the force of circumstances, but almost in defiance of perpetual incitement to error. Witnessing in one parent, perpetual manifestations of absurdity, and beholding in the other nothing but insignificance, it was the happy lot of Prince Henry, as far as his short life extended, to unite the best, or, the only good qualities of both parents. To the love of learning, and simple-heartedness of King James, he joined the courtesy and good nature of Queen Anne, escaping, as it were by a miracle, the pompous vanity of the one, and the unthinking frivolity of the other parent.† Towards this young prince, justly denominated by his contemporaries, "the flower of his house ‡," Ralegh

* Birch's Life of Prince Henry. In James's instructions to his son, he particularly commends his discovery of a female impostor. Ibid. 38.

† This queen was mistress of Somerset House, which she would fain have named Denmark House, and so it was called by her people during her life. In this palace she held a continual masquerade. She and her ladies, like so many sea-nymphs or nereids, continually delighting all beholders by the display of new dresses. The King had his favourites in one place, she in another: she loved the Earl of Pembroke, he patronized the Earl of Montgomery, his brother. Wilson's Life of King James I. 685.

‡ Winwood's Mem. iii. 410.

expressed an enthusiastic admiration: and, indeed, the mind of Henry Stuart appears in many instances to have been congenial to that of the illustrious prisoner to whom he extended his favour. Unlike the King his father, the prince loved the semblance and mimicry of war; and from his delight in tilting, the barriers, and other martial exercises, he had become highly popular among the people *, to whom such diversions recalled the days of the Tudors and Plantagenets. With such a disposition, it is natural to suppose that the young candidate in the lists of military fame must have regarded the veteran warrior with veneration and interest.

In respect to maritime affairs, especially, their tastes were similar; for Ralegh, who perfectly understood this subject, found in the prince an ardent spirit of enquiry, which augured well for the future benefit of the British navy.† To him Ralegh dedicated his work, entitled "Observations on the Royal Navy and Sea Service," and a "Discourse of a Maritimal Voyage," never published. It was also his intention to have dedicated to his young patron the second and third volumes of his History of the World, which he purposed, as he himself expresses it, to "have hewn out," but which, from the death of this

* Wilson, v. 685.

† Birch's Life of Prince Henry, 297. See also Ralegh's Works in Birch, vol. ii.

powerful friend, from the discouraging circumstances attending the sale of the first part, or from new schemes, and the revival of hopes of liberty, was never completed. The prince, to whom Ralegh applied the epithets "most excellent and hopeful *," was a proficient also in classical literature, in which he had been carefully trained; and had himself displayed so premature a genius, as to compose, when only in his tenth year, a Latin hexameter poem, entitled the "New Year's Gift." † Concurring in their general tastes, widely as all other circumstances relating to them differed, the Prince and Ralegh were also, in one respect, similarly situated: they were both supposed to be objects of jealous suspicion to the King, who is said to have thought his "fearless and noble" son ‡ "too high mounted in the people's love §," whilst he saw in Ralegh a great luminary, beneath whose lustre the brightness of other lights must fade, or be wholly obscured. Congenial in mind and in pursuits, a grateful and enthusiastic admiration prevailed between these two individuals. That "none but his father would keep such a bird in such a cage ‖" was the well-known observation of Prince Henry; and Ralegh, after the untimely death of this

* Birch.
† Ibid. 38.
‡ Aulicus Coquinariæ.
§ Wilson, 685.
‖ Osborn's Miscell. Works, ii. 165.

promising youth, alludes to the decease of his royal friend in terms of sorrow almost prophetic. Speaking of one of his own works, he says, "But God has spared me the labour of finishing by his loss, by the loss of that brave prince, of which, like an eclipse of the sun, we shall feel the effects hereafter. Impossible it is to equal words and sorrows; I will, therefore, leave him in the hands of God that hath him."*

At the command of Prince Henry, Ralegh composed, in 1511, two discourses, concerning the double alliances which were proposed between the duchy of Savoy and the house of Stuart. In those treatises, which are written in the clear, forcible, and animated style which characterizes Ralegh's pen, he proves the unsuitableness and inexpediency of the proposed marriages, and recommends the continuance of the Prince in celibacy, until "his Majesty have somewhat repaired his estate, and provided beautiful gardens to plant those olive branches in."† In this counsel the inclination of the Prince was probably considered; for report not only assigned the honour of his regards to the infamous Frances Howard, Countess of Essex, but his own testimony presented the reasons of his dislike to the Savoyan contract.‡ Induced by

* Hist. World, lib. v. c. 1. § 6.
† Works of Ralegh. Birch, i. 278.
‡ Welwood's Notes to Wilson, 688.

arguments to approve of the marriage with a daughter of France, this conscientious youth, the only prince of the Stuart line who could be strictly termed Protestant, repented bitterly on his death-bed that he had ever been induced to accede to the proposal of wedding a Papist; and considered his illness as a judgment on that account.* Yet as we may suppose that the sentiments expressed by Ralegh in his work tallied with those of the Prince, it was obviously their agreed conclusion, that no other foreign marriage presented advantages, so powerfully overbalancing the impediment which difference of religious faith presented, as that with Henrietta Maria of France, subsequently the queen-consort of Charles the First. †

It is probable that Ralegh owed his station in the regard of the young prince chiefly to the good offices of Sir John Harrington, who acted almost in the capacity of a tutor to the heir-apparent. It is not unlikely that he was also indebted for the kindly feelings displayed to him by Henry, to his mother, Anne of Denmark, the queen-consort, a weak but good-natured woman, and an indifferent, and, as some thought, faithless wife, but an affectionate, though not judicious mother. From this princess Ralegh is said to have eventually received the dearest boon that

* Winwood's Mem. iii. 410. † Ralegh's Works.

an innocent man can crave, that of restored reputation, the Queen granting him, at a subsequent period, the privilege of having Cobham re-examined. She proved to him, indeed, on various occasions, a kind mediator and friend; and Ralegh, as we shall find, had recourse, on some occasions, to her good offices.

But his fortunes, as far as his worldly estates were concerned, were now irremediably ruined; and the wreck of all his dearly-earned posessions was eventually completed by the injustice of King James, and the cupidity of his courtiers.

CHAP. VI.

ESTIMATE OF RALEGH'S PROPERTY. — HIS ESTATES AND OCCUPATIONS IN IRELAND. — RALEGH'S COMPANIONS IN PRISON. — HIS SCHEMES WITH RESPECT TO GUIANA.—DEATH OF CECIL AND OF PRINCE HENRY. RALEGH'S RELEASE FROM THE TOWER.

In order fully to comprehend the losses and deprivations which it was Ralegh's fate to sustain, it is necessary to take a short review of those various gradations in the scale of wealth, by which he rose to the possession of a considerable estate.

His property in Ireland, by order of time, ought first to be noticed. The history of his possessions in that country must be referred to the period of the rebellion in the reign of Elizabeth, who found it expedient, in 1582, to attaint Gerald Fitzgerald, the last Earl of the Geraldines, a man of almost princely power over the semi-barbarous people amongst whom he resided. This potent nobleman could muster, it was said, at a call, six hundred horse and two thousand foot, and had five hundred gentlemen of his kindred and surname on his estate. Upon his destruction, and that of his adherents, the Queen divided his extensive possessions in Cork, Waterford, Kerry, and Limerick, among those officers and knights in her armies who had been chiefly engaged in subduing the power of her enemies

in the sister countries. The forfeited lands were divided, therefore, into manors and seignories, containing each from four to twelve thousand acres, bogs, and mountains not being included until improved and fertilized. The undertakers, as they were called, of these estates, were freed of all taxes, except subsidies levied by parliament, and were to import all commodities into England, duty free, for five years. They were obliged to furnish, for the defence of their new possessions, horse and foot men, in number proportioned to their share of the forfeited demesnes; an arrangement by which an effective force was afterwards supplied to the country. In 1586, Sir Walter Ralegh obtained a warrant from the Privy Seal, granting him three seignories and a half in the lands of Cork* and Waterford, constituting an estate of 12,000 acres.† This domain he held in fee-farm, and with it, at Youghal, in the barony of Imohilly, a house belonging, before the dissolution of the monasteries, to the friars preachers, with a rent of twelve pounds, nineteen shillings and sixpence sterling, payable at Easter and Michaelmas.‡

It would seem that Ralegh had but little leisure to enter into the concerns of his Irish estates with interest, or that, in the turbulent scenes in which

* Smith's Hist. Cork, i. 55, 56. † Ibid. 54.
‡ Ibid. 109.

he was mingled in that country, he could have enjoyed sufficient leisure to attend to the improvement of the inhabitants or the culture of the soil. From the manuscript records of the town, it appears that he held the office of mayor of Youghal in 1588 *, and he probably occupied the house belonging to him near the cottage or priory, for one room still bears the traditional name of "Sir Walter's Study," having in it a rich and curiously-carved old chimney-piece. This residence is situated on the north side of the church, and on the south side stands a large building, called the College, founded by the Geraldines, and which came also into Ralegh's possessions.

At Youghal the first potatoes were landed in Ireland from Virginia †, by Sir Walter Ralegh; and, at the same time, the celebrated affane cherry was brought by him there from the Canary islands. The well-known tale of the potatoe-apple being at first gathered and tasted by the person who planted it, and of the early

* For this information I am indebted to Crofton Croker Esq., whose works on Irish traditions and antiquities are so well known, and so justly admired. That gentleman inspected these records in 1821, and visited the house formerly belonging to Ralegh, and now inhabited by Sir Christopher Musgrave. It is a plain old-fashioned house, with an abundance of fine myrtles, some of them twenty feet high, in the garden.

† Potatoes came originally from Mexico, whence they had probably been introduced into Virginia.

neglect of this valuable production, originated in the neighbourhood of Youghal. The roots were for some time left untouched, until the ground in which they were sown, being dug up, their real value was discovered. From this small portion of seed, the whole country of Ireland was supplied with that, which has since proved to be almost its only secure resource as a commodity for the support of life. *

In 1602 Ralegh was induced to sell his estates in Ireland to Richard Boyle, afterwards Earl of Cork, a man of energetic habits and of powerful understanding, and who knew well both how to contrive an excellent bargain for his own interests, and to turn every possession to full account. This enterprizing founder of a family, afterwards so greatly renowned both in arms and letters, returned to England, his native country, with an introduction to Sir Robert Cecil from the president of Munster, who requested the assistance of the secretary to Mr. Boyle in effecting the purchase of Sir Walter Ralegh's seignory in Cork. Ralegh, it is said, had no repugnance to the sale of his property, on account of the heavy sums which it cost him to support his titles to it, his annual expenses on that account amounting to two hundred pounds. † It appears, however, that Mr. Boyle purchased the estate at a very

* Smith's Hist. Cork, p. 1—120.

† Note in Biographia, first Art. Boyle.

low rate, upon the plea of its uncultivated condition; and that it not only became a most advantageous acquisition to him eventually, but was considered by him at the time as a great and fortunate augmentation to his estate, and as one more profitable to him even than the possession of a richly-dowered wife, or of a former grant to himself of lands in Munster, had hitherto proved.*

It has likewise been manifested, in a recent work on the antiquities of the south of Ireland, that the "great earl," as he was popularly entitled, acted a very equivocal part in this transaction, and succeeded in duping the penetrating, but rash owner of the lands, who had parted with them at a price far inferior to their value. † It is obvious, from the tenour of the earl's own memorial, that he thought it necessary to write in an apologetical strain upon the subject; for he declares, that he not only paid Sir Walter the full amount of what he owed him for his estate, long before Ralegh's attainder, but that he presented him with a thousand pounds after that event; preferring, from compassion and generosity, to give him that sum in full, than to accept of a composition of five hundred marks from the crown, with an offer of a full acquittal under the broad seal, if

* See Mr. C. Croker's Researches in the South of Ireland, 1824.

† Ibid. ‡ Smith's Hist. of Cork, note, i. 121.

he complied with that proposition.* This is the earl's own exposition of his conduct; but it has been hinted, that his conduct was not so honourable as this representation would seem to imply, and some remonstrance appears to have been made, in subsequent times, against the transaction, as irregular and illegal. It was not, however, a time, for those suffering from adversity and oppression, to appeal with success against the favoured and the prosperous. The estate remained in the possession of Boyle, by whom it was soon rendered one of the most flourishing properties in the sister kingdom.

With respect to his English domains, Ralegh was even still more unfortunate than in his Irish property; for he had the distress of seeing those lands which he had improved and embellished with care, and had hoped to transmit, as a family inheritance, to his son, wrested from him, and bestowed upon an unworthy favourite of the king's, in defiance of every principle of justice, and in disregard of every impulse of compassion.

We have already seen that Ralegh was unable to effect the purchase of the simple and retired residence of his youth, for which he applied in 1584, offering to give the owner "whatsoever in his conscience he should deem it to be worth;" preferring, as he alleged, for the "natural disposition" which he had to that place,

* Smith's Cork, vol. i. p. 121.

being born in the house, rather "to seat himself there than any where else *." In case of refusal on this point, it was at this time Sir Walter's determination to build a house at Colliton in Devonshire; but circumstances afterwards induced him to select, as a family residence, Sherborne or Shireborne, in the same county, described by Aubrey as "a most sweet and pleasant place, and site, as any in the west." From this estate alone, he afterwards cleared five thousand pounds yearly.

A curious manuscript, relating to this noble seat, has been preserved and published in the Collectanea Curiosa. The lands of Sherborne were bequeathed by Osmund, a Norman knight, to the see of Canterbury, with a heavy denunciation against any rash or profane person who should attempt to wrest them from the church. † This anathema was, in the opinion of the vulgar, first accomplished in the person of the protector Somerset, to whom, after sundry vicissitudes, the property devolved. This nobleman was hunting in the woods of Sherborne, when his presence was required by Edward the Sixth; and he was shortly afterwards committed to the Tower, and subsequently beheaded. The forfeited estate then reverted to the see of Salisbury, until the reign of Queen

* See Aubrey's MSS.

† Peck's Collectanea, 520.

Elizabeth, to whom it was made over by Coldwell, bishop of Salisbury, at the instigation of Ralegh, who was blamed, and apparently with justice, for having displayed on this occasion a grasping and even dishonourable spirit. So strong were the religious prejudices of the day, that even the discerning Sir John Harrington attributed to a judgment from heaven a trifling accident which occurred to Ralegh whilst surveying the demesne which he coveted. Casting his eyes upon it, according to the notion of that writer, as Ahab did upon Naboth's vineyard, and, in the course of a journey from Plymouth to the coast, discussing at the same time the advantages of the desired possession, Sir Walter's horse fell, and the face of its rider then, as the relater observes, "thought to be a very good one," was buried in the ground *. Having obtained the estate, Ralegh resolved to improve and embellish it to the utmost of his means. He first began to build a fine castle; but, changing his design, erected a noble house, which he rendered superior to all the places around it. Here he appears, from his letters, to have both exercised the duties of hospitality, and to have enjoyed the society of his friends in a public career, although at so great a distance from the metropolis †; and here he

* Brief View of the State of the Church of England, p. 88.

† See his Letter to Cobham, in Appendix.

anticipated also the calm refreshment of philosophic leisure; "building," says Aubrey, "a delicate lodge in the parke of brick, not big, but very convenient for the bignesse, a place to retire from the court in summer time, and to contemplate." * But he was destined never to enjoy the fruition of his wishes, in seeing his name and family reinstated in rank and influence in his native county. In 1662 he had found it expedient to settle Sherborne upon his eldest son. The supposed cause of this determination was a challenge from Sir Amias Preston, one of the commanders who had been knighted by the Earl of Essex at the siege of Cadiz; but neither the origin nor the issue of the quarrel have transpired. All that is known of Ralegh's sentiments upon the occasion, is, his declaration that he "*intended* to answer" the challenge. Yet it is uncertain whether or not he declined it; the difference of military rank and character being a sufficient plea for deviating from the received laws of honour, and the fashionable practice of the times. It may be surmised that Ralegh had high and important reasons and obligations to pursue a line of conduct which manifested the true and delicate perception of that honour, on which so many are ready to discourse, and which so few are

* Aubrey's MSS. Oxf. ed. of Ral. Works. App. 738.

able to understand; and that he may have sought to discountenance a custom then so prevalent, that Lord Bacon, when Attorney-General, was obliged, in 1614, to make an example of a butcher and a barber-surgeon in the Marshalsea Court, in order that this dangerous and disgraceful practice might be brought into contempt.* It is obvious that Ralegh viewed the character of a duellist with the cool and well-digested sentiments of a philosopher, rather than with the inflated enthusiasm of a soldier. In his History, he ridicules the false notions which teach us to consider it "as a far greater dishonour to receive from an enemy a slight touch with a cane, than a sound blow with a sword; the one having relation to a slave, the other to a souldier." And concerning the received belief that to decry duelling, and to be a coward, are synonymous, he remarks that it is true; "if you call it cowardice to fear God and hell; whereas he that is truly wise or valiant knows that there is nothing else to be feared."† Such being the sentiments of Ralegh, we must look for some different cause than the prospect of a duel, to account for his transfer of his principal estate to his son; and it is not difficult to conjecture that he may have anticipated the vicissitudes of his coming years,

* Sanderson's Life of James I., p. 395.

† Hist. World. b. 5. chap. 3. p. 677.

and sought to preserve this portion of his property from the effects of the lowering storm.

This measure, if the result of forethought, was prudent, but it was unavailing. After his trial, the enemies of Ralegh pretended to find a flaw in the deed of conveyance, and for the omission of a single word, the oversight of a clerk, and which was in the paper copy only, it fell into the possession of the crown.* The person principally benefited by this discovery was Car, Earl of Somerset, who brought the matter before the Court of Exchequer, in which a decision was given against Ralegh :† "a judgment," observes the relater of the fact,‡ "easily to be foreseen without witchcraft, since his chiefest judge was his greatest enemy, and the case argued between a poor friendless prisoner, and a King of England." This event took place seven years after the commencement of Sir Walter Ralegh's imprisonment, until which period he had enjoyed the revenues of Sherborne. In vain did the persevering Lady Ralegh,—being, as her son describes her, a woman "of a very high spirit, of noble birth and breeding,"— on her knees, and in the bitterness of

* A Brief Relation of Sir Walter Ralegh's Troubles, 117.

† Oldys, 64.

‡ Carew Ralegh, who presented, in the form of a petition to parliament, some account of this act of oppression. See Birch, i. p. 114.

her heart, in the presence of the King, implore Almighty God to look upon "the justness of her cause, and punish those who had so wrongfully exposed her and her poor children to beggary." The inflexible and insensible monarch, who had neither the feeling to pity, nor the discernment to value this devoted woman, returned, in his usual phrase, this reiterated reply, "I mun have the land; I mun have it for Car." And, accordingly, to Car was the estate conveyed. But the old prophecy, by those who observed the fate of Sherborne with curiosity, was still thought to hang to its destiny. Through the generous exertions of Prince Henry, it may be said to have belonged for a time to the House of Stuart, since he begged it from the King, pretending to fancy the place, but in reality with the hope of restoring it to the accomplished owner of the seat. Unwilling or afraid to refuse the request of his son, James compromised the matter by paying to Car the sum of twenty-five thousand pounds for the surrender of the estate, and even allowed the Lady Ralegh eight thousand pounds for the property.* But the death of the young Prince in 1611 frustrated his generous intentions, and left Sherborne still in the hands of the favourite. The premature decease of this promising youth was thought by the vulgar again to corroborate

* Brief Rel., &c.

the old prophecy, and was one of those singular coincidences which, in human affairs, confirm the day-dreams of superstitious reasoners. But, in the times of the Tudors and the Stuarts, estates were so often gained and lost, on the one hand by the misfortunes of the real owners, and, on the other, by the iniquities of those who reaped them, that few exchanges of property from one family to another, took place without being occasioned by some tragical occurrence. To Carew, the youngest son, and the injured survivor of Sir Walter Ralegh, the subsequent attainder of Car, and the forfeiture of his estates, upon his committal to the Tower for the murder of Overbury, appeared to confirm the ill fortune attendant upon the owners of Sherborne; and the misfortunes which afterwards befel the House of Stuart were also considered by him to corroborate the old presage. The spell has, however, since been broken; for, on the confiscation of Car's estates, Digby, Earl of Bristol, obtained Sherborne from the King, on account of his services in the embassy to Spain. This nobleman added two wings to the house; and in his family it now remains.*

During the proceedings relative to his favourite and boasted residence, upon which he had expended a considerable portion of his gleanings in the public service, Ralegh endeavoured to

* Brief Rel., 117.

avail himself of his eloquent pen in order to excite the pity or obtain the justice of those who were reaping the fruits of his self-created fortune. Fame, which as Lord Bacon has observed, "hath swift wings, especially that which hath black feathers,"* soon brought to him, even in prison, intelligence of all those courtly intrigues, by which his miserable fate might be alleviated or depressed. In 1608, we find him addressing to Car an expostulatory letter, couched in those guarded and insidious, yet moving terms, of which many of Ralegh's epistles present a specimen. Perhaps there can scarcely be any supplication more delicately and happily expressed than the following natural yet polished address to a young and favoured courtier, just entering upon those deluding delights of successful ambition and gratified vanity, of which Ralegh had himself shared largely. "And for yourself, sir," he observes, "seeing your fair day is but now in the dawn, and mine drawn to the evening, your own virtues and the king's grace assuring you of many honours, I beseech you not to begin your first building upon the ruins of the innocent; and that their sorrows, with mine, may not attend your first plantation." But Ralegh, in his application to Car, appealed not to a generous, and honourable, young favourite

* Bacon's Letters by Stephens, 90.

† Ralegh's Letter to Car, in Cayley, vol. ii. 43.

of fortune, like Essex, who would rather have impoverished himself than "have cut down the tree for the fruit, and undergone the curse of them that enter the fields of the fatherless." * Somerset was, from his early nurture in a subordinate station, weak and pliable, and incapable of greatness, although originally, until ensnared by the allurements of a depraved woman, of a gentle and affable disposition.† Besides, there were other sufficient reasons that Somerset should not incline to the requests of one who enjoyed the friendship of Prince Henry; a bitter jealousy both of the king's favour, and a still more dangerous rivalry in the affections of the Lady Frances Howard, at this time subsisting between those two distinguished personages.‡

In regard to the residue of his property, Ralegh was scarcely less unfortunate than with respect to Sherborne. The extent of any other estates which he possessed has not been ascertained. Some proofs remain of his having been the owner of a house at Islington, near the church, which was stated by tradition to have belonged to Sir Walter Ralegh, the insertion of his arms, and several old account books which were found in it, confirming that idea. There is no evidence that a seat at West Horseley in Surrey, after-

* Ralegh's Letter to Car, in Cayley, vol. ii. 40.
† Wilson, 700. ‡ Ibid. 686.

wards occupied by his son, and also decorated with the family arms, ever belonged to Sir Walter Ralegh. With regard to his residence in London, it frequently changed from Somerset House, St. James's, and Durham House: in all of these places he is supposed to have had apartments; and in the latter, which Aubrey describes as a noble palace, he is stated to have had a study, "which," says that writer, "I well remember, on a little turret that looked into and over the Thames, and had the prospect which is pleasant, perhaps, as any in the world, and which not only refreshes the eyesight, but cheers the spirits, and (to speake my mind) I believe enlarges an ingeniose man's thoughts." * Ralegh afterwards sold a house at Mitcham in Surrey, for the sum of twenty-five thousand pounds, in order to enable him to prosecute his last voyage to Guiana.† In 1604, all his goods and chattels were, by the king's grant, given over to trustees of Ralegh's appointing, to be sold for the benefit of his creditors, and of his lady and his children.‡ To these proceedings there were some obstructions, from the knavery of those upon whose prompt and honest assistance Ralegh

* Aubrey's MSS.

† Observations on Sanderson's History. Introduct. 10.

‡ Birch, 62, from Rymer's Fœdera.

had a peculiar right to depend. Sanderson, a gentleman by birth, father of the historian of that name, had married Margaret Snedale, a niece of Sir Walter Ralegh's, and was on that account empowered to receive considerable sums from the office of wines and other charges, with which Ralegh had been in the days of his prosperity intrusted. Upon an account of these being required, Sanderson, with shameless dishonesty, not only declined giving up the proceeds, but attempted to put in a claim of two thousand pounds upon Sir Walter's estate. An action was therefore commenced against him, and he was found liable to the demand, and thrown into prison.* This act of justice is thought to have provoked the enmity of Sanderson's son, who inherited the assurance and treachery for which only his father was remarkable. Becoming secretary to the Earl of Holland, who was chancellor of Cambridge, this younger Sanderson was turned out of the university for receiving bribes from scholars and bachelors to make them doctors of divinity upon an occasion of festivity; and "Sanderson's doctors" were long proverbial at that seminary of learning as a term for assumption and knavery. By his marriage with the Queen's laundress, Sanderson

* Cayley's Life, vol. ii. p. 40.

was afterwards initiated into that partial, venomous species of information which the base know best how to glean, and the vindictive how to apply. In his History of Mary Queen of Scots, and of her son James, this truly reprehensible writer has endeavoured to level the greatest men to the standard which he best understood; and reversing the admonition of the wise man, showed that he neither forgot nor spared his own, nor his father's enemies. Ralegh came, therefore, under the severity of his scourge; and had not historians of indisputable accuracy, knowledge, and impartiality, agreed in condemning Sanderson as an author of no credit*, posterity, affixing much importance to the testimony of a contemporary writer, might have done lamentable injustice to the memory of one who committed doubtless many errors, but not the gross and heinous sins which Sanderson has laid to his charge. †

Thus, whilst the law in one instance, with unjust exactness and rigour, gave away one portion of the unfortunate Ralegh's property, his character suffered even in the endeavour to re-

* Heylin, in his Examen Historicum. See Advertisement to Ob. on Sanderson's Hist. Birch, Oldys, Cayley, Ralegh's Biog., are perhaps partial evidence, at least the two latter.

† See Sanderson's Hist. James, pp. 461, 462.

deem another which had been unjustly wrested from him. To add to the trouble and anxiety incident to the first of these proceedings, suspicion now arose, on the part of the government, of Ralegh's participation in the gunpowder plot, that conspiracy being discovered during his imprisonment. It was, perhaps, in reference to these surmises, or to the dread of his obtaining too great popularity, that a letter was about this time addressed by Sir William Wade to the Earl of Salisbury, before whom, as it appears, Ralegh had been taken and examined.

1605.

"Sir Walter Ralegh sithence his being before your Lordship (whereof notice is generally taken) doth shew himself upon the wall in his garden to the view of the people, who gaze upon him, and he stareth on them. Which he doth in his cunning humour, that it might be thought his being before your Lordship was rather to clear than to charge him. And so he challengeth his keeper, that your Lordship gave him new liberty, for his son to go abroad, and his physician to resort to him. Which, I assure your Lordship, he useth only to justify himself; and the world expecteth rather farther restraint than liberty. Which made me bold in discretion and conveniency to restrain him again, and meet with his indiscreet humour, until your Lordship

shall otherwise order." * This document shows that Ralegh had experienced some alleviations of the severity of his confinement, at the instances of Cecil; but Wade, on the contrary, appears, from his own account, to have a rigid and suspicious keeper; and to have urged rather the enforcement than the relaxation of severity. Unhappily, Ralegh's constitution was now irremediably broken by his long privation of the free enjoyments of exercise and change of scene, and an anticipation of approaching death is obvious in a letter which he addressed to the Queen in 1611. † An extreme shortness of breath made him, to use his own expression, in referring to the schemes which he still cherished respecting Guiana, "resolve that God had otherwise disposed of that business, and of him." In the same affecting strain he laments that he despaired of obtaining so much grace as to be allowed to walk with his keeper up the hill within the Tower; and piteously referred to the hardship of being "shut up after eight years of durance, as straightly as before; and the punishment due to other men's extreme negligence laid altogether upon his patience and obedience." His latter passage referred, probably, to some passing occurrence, perhaps the

* Birch's Collection in Brit. Museum, 4160. cxxiii. Cayley, 241.

† In the State Paper Office. See App.

escape of some state prisoners. But his fortitude had now nearly deserted him; and in the same letter to the Queen, he declares that it were a "suit far more fitting the hardness of his destiny to desire to die once for all, and thereby to give end to the miseries of this life, than to strive against the ordinance of God, who is a true judge of his innocence."

Ralegh was not, however, without his companions in misfortune; and amongst those were some men distinguished both for their rank and acquirements. Of these, the most conspicuous was Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, who had interceded for Ralegh with the king at an early period of this reign. This nobleman had been suspected of some concern in the gunpowder plot, from the mere circumstance of his kinsman, and agent in the north, Thomas Percy, one of the conspirators, having called at Sion house, on his journey to London, a few days before the discovery of that famous treason. Upon this suspicion, followed by a star-chamber accusation, the Earl was committed to the
1604. Tower, where he remained fifteen years; quitting his unmerited imprisonment two years after Ralegh was also released from it. In addition to this decree, Northumberland was deprived of all his offices, and condemned to pay a fine of thirty thousand pounds, — a sum which was appropriated to the payment of the Queen's

debts. * But the Earl had powerful friends, and family connections; and upon his release, reassumed a degree of splendour and consequence which the ruined state of Ralegh could never entitle him again to maintain. Such was the pride of the highly descended Percy, that, shortly after his restoration, hearing that the Duke of Buckingham had six horses to his coach, he appeared with eight; and in that style travelled from Bath to London: an equipage the more remarkable, as the species of conveyance which he adopted had been rare, even with two horses, in the late Queen's reign. † Notwithstanding this act of folly, the earl was a reflective and intelligent man; the patron of science; and in his pursuits, of a taste congenial to that of Ralegh. Herriot, Miers, and Warner, eminent for their mathematical acquirements, shared and enlivened his captivity; and Sergeant Hoskyns, and Dr. Lionel Sharpe, were also committed to the Tower during the course of Ralegh's continuance in it. Sharpe had been chaplain to the Earl of Essex and to Prince Henry; but was imprisoned for one year upon suspicion of having suggested to Sergeant Hoskyns some obnoxious allusions which that lawyer introduced into a bold speech made by him in the House of Commons. ‡

* Aikin's James I. vol. i. p. 274. † Wilson, 720.
‡ Birch's Mem. of P. Henry, 63.

Hoskyns, who had acquired the reputation of a poet, is said to have played "The Aristarchus" to Ralegh, during their mutual seclusion from more enlarged society.* The conversation of these persons proved, no doubt, a source of recreation and amusement to Ralegh; but it is probable the chief solace of his retirement consisted in the schemes which he had never wholly relinquished, and which he now again prosecuted with vigour, for the second investigation of Guiana. One great obstacle to this object was removed by the death of Cecil; for that minister had ever been resolutely opposed to
1612. the plans which Ralegh, at various times, proposed to the King with respect to this remote territory. Salisbury, of whom it was said that he was the "first ill treasurer and the last good since the days of Queen Elizabeth†," died on the twenty-eighth of May, at Marlborough, on his road from Bath, whither he had gone as a last resource for the cure of complicated diseases, at length terminating in consumption.‡ After cruel and lingering sufferings, the mind of this indefatigable and ambitious statesman was not only resigned to the approach of death, but eager to receive the last awful summons from a weary existence. "Ease and pleasure," said the dying minister,

* Aubrey's MSS. Oxford Ed. of Ralegh's Works, 663.
† Biograph. ‡ Winwood, iii. 467.

"quake to hear of death; but my life, full of cares and miseries, desireth to be dissolved." * In his latter moments, retaining all the collectedness and tenacity of memory for which he was remarkable, he manifested also the patience and hope of a Christian; such as is said to "have brought joy into the sorrow of those around him, in their greatest discomforts giving full assurance of their best happiness." † The King, the Queen, and the Prince severally sent him tokens of their regard and sympathy, almost too late to afford happiness to a mind bent on higher consolations than the favour of princes. Although unpopular, probably on account partly of his enclosures of Hatfield Chase, and occupation of the palace there, which he had exchanged with the king for Theobalds, partly from his conduct to Ralegh, and partly, probably, from his near relationship to Cobham, whose sister he had married ‡, Salisbury was allowed to possess dexterity and judgment, which were more fully appreciated when his successor, the Earl of Suffolk, a man of small capacity, came into power. § The expedients adopted by Cecil for replenishing the treasury, which James dispersed among unworthy favourites, had both reference to public convenience, and a regard to the maintenance of the royal dignity. He obtained a

* Collectanea Curiosa, by Gutch. Sir W. Cope's Apol.
† Winwood, 368. ‡ Biog. § Hume.

great yearly revenue by bargaining that the New River water should be brought to London; but it was not till after his death that the disgraceful practice was begun of selling the order of baronet, which he had introduced in imitation of Edward III.; or that other expedients were adopted equally unworthy of the sovereign whose profusion occasioned, or whose weakness permitted, such depredations.

There was a prophecy in King James's reign, "that Salisbury's crazy body should yield before Prince Henry's *;" alluding, probably, to those arts of poisoning to which all persons of rank or influence were remarkably exposed at this era. It was not long, however, before this accomplished young prince, in falling a victim to a malignant fever, confirmed that part of the prophecy by which it might be implied, that his destiny and that of Cecil, in respect to the period of their deaths, was united.†

Concerning the cause of the Prince's malady strange rumours were afloat, circulated, not only by vulgar acclamation, but by means of the individuals most in the vicinity, and even in the secrets, of the court.‡ Yet, to those who carefully follow the progress of his disorder, and consider the de-

* Aulicus Coquinariæ, 118.

† Prince Henry died first, — 1611.

‡ See Letter from Mr. Beaulieu to Mr. Turnbull. Winwood.

lay of administering medical aid, and the time thus afforded to the aggravation of the disease, and who mark the feebleness and inefficiency of the remedies which were applied to the violent symptoms, which his disorder from its first appearance manifested, it will not appear extraordinary that an attack, apparently trifling in the beginning, should have proved mortal, in days when the application of "cloven pigeons *" to the feet, and other equally puerile efforts, were deemed advisable by the unscientific and embarrassed physicians usually in attendance. The Prince began to decline in health in September, complaining of pain and giddiness in the head. † After removing from place to place for change of air, he took up his abode at St. James's on the 25th of October, about which time he was occasionally confined to bed. As the autumn advanced, his indisposition increased; and a drowsiness and coldness in his head created in the mind of the sufferer himself a suspicion that he had imbibed what was then called "the disease," a species of fever supposed to have been brought from Hungary.‡ These indications of sickness appear, however, to have excited but little attention from his own family, although the

* See Birch's Life of Prince Henry, 270. also Aul. Coq. 154.

† Notes to Wilson, 689. vol. ii. 410.

‡ Birch, Ed. 1756, 383.

paleness of his countenance, and the change in his temper, which displayed alternate fits of apathy and of irritability, were perceptible to all who casually beheld him on public occasions. It was remarkable, that on one of the last occasions of public worship that this lamented prince ever attended, the text of the sermon was taken from that fine passage of Job, beginning, "Man, that is born of a woman, is of short continuance, and of long trouble. * On the second of November he dined with the King and the Prince-palatine, who was shortly afterwards married to the Lady Elizabeth, scarcely less the idol of the nation than the Prince her brother. This was the last social enjoyment in which he was able to participate, his malady increasing rapidly, and, to all appearance, hopelessly. In this state of public dismay, the Queen, who fondly loved a son, rather a source of pride than an object of affection to her royal consort, remembered that Ralegh had formerly administered to her with success a medicine of his own composing, which has since obtained the popular name of his cordial. It is said that the reward which Ralegh required in the first instance for giving the specific was, that Cobham should be re-examined, a demand as creditable to his innocence as it was infamous to his country in which justification could not then be obtained without either

* Birch, Ed. 1756, 337.

bribery or interest. He was now enjoined to lend the aid of his invention for a purpose, if possible, of even greater moment than the fruitless attempt to clear his blasted fame; and was commanded by the Queen to send it for the benefit of the dying prince. By some writers a different story is told; and it is asserted that the Queen herself, being given over by the physicians as incurable, the skill of Ralegh was resorted to with success; and that it was on this occasion that Cobham was brought forth from his ignominious seclusion to corroborate or deny his statements respecting Ralegh, in presence of six lords sent by the King to examine him. By the same authority it is stated, that Cobham declared that Wade had forged the written document produced as his evidence against Ralegh, having procured the wretched peer's signature to a blank piece of paper.* The lords, on returning to Lord Salisbury, are said to have commissioned him to inform the King that Cobham "had subscribed to all that he had written;" a stratagem which, if practised, would have been base in the extreme; but this anecdote is extremely improbable, Cobham being with difficulty brought to subscribe to any examination, and therefore not very likely to put his name thus incautiously to a document, in which any thing whatsoever might be inserted.† It is however certain,

* Weldon's Court and Character of K. James, 12mo. p. 35.

† Cayley, vol. ii. p. 48. note.

that, either during the illness of the Queen, or of the Prince, Ralegh availed himself of his transitory importance, as a man of science, to procure the examination of Cobham, who is stated on that occasion to have acquitted him of all that had been before alleged. Whatever may have been the boon promised for the trial of the cordial, or whether it were granted at this critical period, or during the illness of the Queen, it is singular that he, who had been charged with conspiring to extirpate the king and his family, should have been entrusted with the administration of any potion to them, the ingredients of which were unknown. Ralegh, expressing a tender concern for the fate of his young patron, complied, however, with the injunction of her Majesty, but accompanied the cordial with a letter, purporting that the remedy would cure the Prince or any other person of a fever, except in case of poison.* The cordial was received by the Prince's attendants, was tasted, proved, and given to the expiring youth, but with no other success than that of procuring some rest.† It was not indeed, very probable, that the remedy which had been given with success to the Queen, who had a dropsy, could have a beneficial effect in a fever; but the belief in specifics was then universal, and Ralegh was not, probably, sufficiently profound

* Welwood's Notes to Wilson, 714.

† Birch's Life of P. Henry, 270.

in medical science to discredit their efficacy. The vital energy of the young prince's frame was now unhappily destroyed; and repeated attacks of convulsion and of death-like faintings had at times given birth to the report that life had already fled. Nothing could arrest the hand of death; and this bud of promise yielded to it on the sixth of November, after an illness obviously of twelve days continuance, but, in all probability, for some weeks threatening his existence before it was discovered.

The general impression that some foul conspiracy or private vengeance had cut short the days of the royal youth displayed itself immediately after his decease. The King, unwilling, as it was said, to remain so near the gates of sorrow, had removed from the metropolis, where the young prince died, to Theobalds, there to await the event. The Queen, resting upon the rash assertion of Ralegh in his letter to her, affirmed till her last hour that her lamented son had been poisoned.* Upon the dissolution of his household, his chaplain alluded so plainly and so pathetically to the supposed cause of his death, that the audience were melted into tears, and the preacher was afterwards dismissed for his rashness.† Some time afterwards, when an investigation of the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury was discussed, the Lord Chief Justice Coke

* Wilson, 714. note.

† Welwood's note, in Wilson, 689.

plainly intimated that Overbury had been murdered to prevent the discovery of another crime, committed on one of the highest rank, whom he termed a "sweet prince." For this allusion Coke lost the king's favour, and some time afterwards his office.

The solution of these mysterious remarks was variously attempted by those who pretended to opportunities of forming a correct judgment. Of Ralegh's opinion on the subject, we have no evidence, nor would prudence have permitted him to join in the popular insinuations so dangerous to others, and so certain of destruction to himself. Sir Robert Naunton, then in the service of Overbury, the friend and tutor of Car, declared, in a letter to Sir Ralph Winwood, that he, "held it not fit to write what he conceived, and less fit to address it to his correspondent, who was then in situations of trust and honour." Rumours of a dark but almost absurd tendency were carried about; — some asserting that the Prince was poisoned by a bunch of grapes; others, that an envenomed pair of gloves had communicated a subtle poison to his head*, the pain principally lying in that part, which was found after his death partly filled with water.†

The person against whom these insinuations were chiefly levelled was Car, Viscount Rochester, now in the height of the absurd favour which James

* Wilson, 690. † Aul. Coq. 154.

had for some time lavished upon him. Yet there were those who attributed a share in the untimely death of the Prince to the Spaniards, whose power and policy he opposed, or to the Catholics in general, whose opinions he detested with more zeal than candour or good sense.* Others, there also were, who, in secret and guarded terms, ventured even to glance at the King as the instigator or assenter to a crime too heinous and too unnatural for the soul of James to contemplate without horror. It was, perhaps, the indiscreet and heartless conduct of that monarch on this occasion which inspired such suspicions. He forbade all mourning in his court,—a circumstance by no means, however, unprecedented, since, after the death of Queen Elizabeth, the foreign ambassadors were forbidden to appear before the King in mourning, and the court was only allowed to wear that tribute of respect for two months†; and he was equally negligent in observing that form when his own consort died. The black imputation which has been cast upon him is unsupported by any evidence of more weight than the gossip and slander of his own court; and it is probable that, had not the disclosures of the infamous Mrs. Turner been brought to light, the alarm of poison would not have been so rapidly conveyed to the public mind,

* Wilson, 790. † Wilson, 681. note.

nor so readily cherished when implanted. It was also, probably, completely discredited by those who had witnessed the dutiful and discreet conduct of the young prince towards his father, who at times had been inclined to censure his son's readiness in entering into public affairs, and even into the regulation of his own household.*

Whilst the death of Prince Henry precluded all hope of permanent sunshine settling upon the path of Ralegh, that of Cecil produced no peculiar benefit to his interests. Circumstances combining, as it might appear, from mere accident, eventually paved the way, however, to a change, seemingly propitious to the restitution of his fortunes. In 1614, he was allowed the liberty of the Tower; a privilege which he owed either to the tranquillity of domestic affairs, or possibly to the intercession of the Queen. But this permission was not enjoyed without the alloy of hearing that his eldest son Walter was obliged to escape into the Low Countries on account of a duel in which he had been engaged with Mr. Robert Tyrwhit, a dependant of the Earl of Suffolk, who had succeeded Cecil as Lord High Treasurer.† The issue of this affair has not transpired; and it can be inferred only that the necessity for absence was merely temporary,

* Birch's Mem. 381. † Birch, 65.

from the return of the youth, and his subsequent employment in the enterprize to Guiana. Meanwhile, singular events and changes had taken place in the English court.

Car, now Earl of Somerset, had for some time been obnoxious to the greater part of the aristocracy, and at open enmity to the queen, who, from some secret persuasion respecting the mode of Prince Henry's death, had never consented to see the favourite since that event; a line of conduct the more remarkable, as the thoughtless and profligate Anne of Denmark had never, in any other instance, been sufficiently aroused from a career of frivolity and a life of insignificance, to interfere in any public transaction.*. Intrigues of the blackest character, and murder, aggravated by every artifice of cruelty, had for some time been gradually worked out of the dark mine in which their iniquitous agents had found means to conceal these heinous crimes. Ralegh, in his imprisonment, might compare his fate with that of the unfortunate Sir Thomas Overbury, who now shared the gloomy confinement to which so many in those days of arbitrary power were destined, without the privilege of being heard, or the satisfaction of legal defence. That unhappy man, guilty in having communication with the guilty, had died

* Welwood's notes to Wilson, 697.

a victim to the lingering poisons of Somerset and his accomplices, infused into every article of his food, and even into the salt with which his meat was seasoned.* The conspiracy by which his death was accomplished, was revealed by one of its meanest members, the apothecary's boy who administered the last poison; and Sir Ralph Winwood, formerly ambassador in the Netherlands, assisted by the Queen, brought the whole matter before the King and council. But little would discovery have availed to the punishment of the delinquents, had not James found a new object, upon which to lavish the weak fondness of a heart indifferent to its natural and nearest ties.

George Villiers, afterwards Duke of Buckingham, and the instrument of Ralegh's release from the Tower, was now considered as the rising favourite. Educated by a careful and provident mother, herself raised from a low station to be the second wife of his father, a Leicestershire knight, Villiers was trained in the expectation of his one day becoming a courtier†; and, being a younger son, with some management furnished with the sum of fifty pounds, and sent up to London. Possessed of a singular and commanding beauty, of an open

* Wilson, 693. † Wilson, 698.

and happy countenance*, and of a calm and pliant temper, Villiers soon attracted the notice of the King, who was captivated with his personal advantages, and was afterwards wont to give him the name of Steney, or Stephen, in an allusion, both adulatory and prophane, to the solemn occasion of which it is recorded that "the council, looking steadfastly" on that apostle, "saw his face as if it had been the face of an angel." † "Favoured rather by the Graces than the Muses," and endowed with acquirements more brilliant than solid, but displaying eventually both courage as a soldier, and in civil life, Villiers was compared to that darling of the chivalrous part of the nation, Brandon, Duke of Suffolk‡, in the time of Henry VIII. This accomplished nobleman § had never, however, been admitted to those marks of favour which almost immediately succeeded the introduction of young Villiers to James. The King took him instantly to be his cup-bearer, an office by which he was retained in the presence of the monarch, without awakening the jealous suspicions of the former favourite; and he was soon afterwards made a gentleman of the bed-chamber. From

* Reliquiæ Wottoniæ, 77. Parallel between the Duke of Buckingham and Earl of Essex.

† Granger's Biography, vol. i. 326. ‡ Rel. Wot. 17.

§ Rel. 30, 31.

this time, the ruin of Somerset proceeded with rapid strides. The King, who had evidently some private reasons for endeavouring to avoid irritating his former idol, dissembled, indeed, with him in the matter of Overbury, whilst he pretended, in his communications with the judges, the utmost zeal for the furtherance of justice. It was during the rise of young Villiers to the highest distinctions of royal favour
1615. that Ralegh, after an imprisonment of twelve years, began to hope once more for the enjoyment of that liberty which he knew so well how to employ. Of the measures which he adopted to procure his liberation little is known, except this melancholy and scandalous fact, that it was not from the relenting sense of justice in the King, or even from his mercy, that Ralegh had to expect this long-craved boon. In those times, public honour was perhaps at its lowest ebb, and bribery most upheld in shameless effrontery. It was essential therefore, and perhaps might be excusable, where the greatest blessing of life was concerned, to bend to the corruptions of the times; and Ralegh, who had formerly descended to receive, from others, payment for his good offices at court, was now constrained to try the potency of similar inducements to others. Accordingly, he paid to Sir William Saint John, and Sir Edward Villiers, the uncles

of the new favourite, the sum of fifteen hundred pounds; and by this means obtained, with the mediation of the Lady Villiers, the mother of Buckingham, his final release.* A few months before this event, he had the singular fate to behold Somerset long triumphant, whilst he languished in confinement, and the usurper of his valued estate of Sherborne, conducted, as a prisoner, to the Tower. Respecting this vicissitude, Ralegh observed, "that the whole history of the world had not the like precedent, of a king's prisoner to purchase freedom, and his bosom favourite to have the halter, but in Scripture, in the case of Mordecai and Haman." Upon being apprized of this remark, the King is said to have observed, "that Ralegh might die in that deceit†;" a singular proof of James's inveterate dislike to this persecuted subject, and a most disgraceful one of the monarch's secret, and afterwards fulfilled intentions to uphold the sinner in his ways.

On the 17th of March 1615, Ralegh was liberated, and on the same day he addressed to Villiers the following letter: —

"Sir, — You have, by your mediation, put me again into the world. I can but acknowledge it: for to pay any part of your favour, by any service of mine, as yet it is not in my power. If

* Oldys, 192. † Birch, 66.

it succeed well, a good part of the honour shall be yours; and if I do not also make it profitable unto you, I shall show myself exceeding ungrateful. In the mean while, and till God discover the success, I beseech you to reckon me among the number of your faithful servants, though the least able.

"W. RALEGH." *

* Oldys, 192.

CHAP. VII.

RALEGH'S DESIGNS WITH REGARD TO GUIANA. — HIS LAST VOYAGE THITHER. — ITS UNFORTUNATE ISSUE. — HIS RETURN. — APPREHENSION. — TRIAL. — DEATH. — ACCOUNT OF HIS LITERARY WORKS, AND CHARACTER.

IT is interesting to conjecture what are likely to be the reflections, and the first efforts of an able and ambitious man, the restlessness of whose active mind has been long repressed by despair, and the co-operating energy of whose bodily exertions diminished, if not annihilated, by the chilling quietude of imprisonment. In returning to what Ralegh might almost deem a renewed existence, he cherished with most avidity the fruition of hopes which had been nurtured in seclusion, and rushed with the greatest degree of ardour into schemes, to which, by contrast with the dreariness and monotony of the foregoing years, a false brilliancy had been imparted.

It has been remarked, in the course of this narrative, that his inclinations had been early directed to maritime pursuits, with a greater zest than to any other means of acquiring fame; a preference resulting, probably, from the associations of his infancy with those whose lives were sedulously passed in advancing the

interests of navigation. As maturer age brought to his view the advantages of speculation to his rising fortunes, Ralegh had continued his naval exploits with the avidity with which mercantile occupations are usually followed, and with the boldness and determination which characterize warlike affairs. In the decline of life, he now regarded his former researches in remote countries as a resource, by the aid of which he might raise his name from degradation, and his condition to affluence and honour. In a retirement of twelve years' continuance, schemes of fresh enterprize and exertion had been his solace and employment, and the first acquisition of liberty was devoted to the fruition of these cherished designs. Unhappily for him, his plans partook of that spirit of romance and temerity which a long seclusion from general society sometimes engenders; and the hopes with which he adorned the prospects of futurity, were lavished upon grounds not calculated to bring him an equitable produce. In order to comprehend fully the merits of the undertaking upon which his solitary meditations were employed, it is necessary to refer to the exertions which Ralegh had made, at a former period of his life, in promoting the extension of maritime discovery.

It were tedious to recapitulate the voyage which he made to Guiana in 1595. Since that fruitless expedition, it might appear that import-

ant occupations, and repeated anxieties and vicissitudes, would have banished all future projects of the same nature from the mind of Ralegh. During the life of Cecil it was, indeed, hopeless to endeavour to procure liberty; and, if liberty, permission for the renewal of this scheme. By a letter in the State Paper Office, it is evident that Ralegh found the opposition of that minister insurmountable; for, addressing the Queen,* he informs her that he had lately presumed to send her Majesty the copy of a letter written to the Lord Treasurer concerning Guiana; and that "there was nothing done therein, he could not but wonder with the world, did not the malice of the world exceed the wisdom thereof." "In mine own respect," he continues, "the ever-living God doth witness that I never sought such an employment; for all the gold in the earth could not invite me to travel after misery and death, both which I had been likely to have overtaken in that voyage, than to have returned from it." The design of revisiting Guiana was, as he affirms, revived entirely for the approving of his faith to the King, "and to have done him such a service as had seldom been performed for any king."† But James, influenced by Cecil, and by Ralegh's other enemies at court, listened to the supplica-

* See Appendix, R. † See Original Letter.

tions of the Queen, and to all other mediators for the unhappy prisoner, only to reply to them in these words: — "That his council knew him better than he did." Some indications of a relenting spirit on the part of government appeared, however, towards the latter years of Ralegh's imprisonment. In aid of these, his own personal exertions, and the small remains of his property, had been continually applied. Even in times of difficulty and distress, he had been able to send a vessel every year to Guiana, to reassure the hopes of the affrighted Indians, who were perpetually liable to the invasions and outrages of the Spanish Colonies in South America. By the ships thus despatched, natives of the province had been occasionally brought to England, and allowed to communicate with Ralegh in the Tower.† After the death of Cecil, and upon the appointment of Sir Ralph Winwood to the office of Secretary of State,
1614. Ralegh resumed his proposals, and in a letter to him, declared it to be his own greatest infelicity, that the King "did NOT know him as those courtiers pretended to do; for, had his Majesty known him, he would never have been where he then was; or, had he known his Ma-

* Harleian Miscellany, iii. 145.

† Ralegh's Apol. for the Voyage to Guiana, in Birch, vol. ii. p. 52, 53.

jesty, they had never been so long where they then were."

To the furtherance of his designs, the patronage, or at least the indulgence, of the court was far more essential than his individual efforts; and Ralegh, with a perseverance not to be daunted, resolved to address himself, again and again, to that source, humbly to supplicate permission to venture the wreck of his fortunes, and the remaining strength of an enfeebled constitution, in the service of his country. In Sir Ralph Winwood he met with a degree of indulgence and encouragement to which he had long been a stranger. Winwood had but recently acquired a justly merited portion of influence, from which he had been precluded during the prosperity of Somerset; who, although occupying the less important office of chamberlain, had engrossed the actual control of all state employments, and had suffered no places nor favours to be given away except by his own hands, or through his acknowledged mediation.* Upon the disgrace of Somerset, Winwood had a transitory enjoyment of real authority, which was closed, however, by his death, in less than two years, worn out by age, and still more by the fatigues of an active and anxious career. To him, Ralegh now, however, addressed a letter, induced, pro-

1615.

* Wilson's James I., p. 698. Grainger, i. p. 381.

bably, to hope for a favourable reply to his petitions, from the integrity of Winwood, who required no bribery from suitors to enforce the justice of their petitions, and by his well-known abilities and attainments, which might enable the veteran ambassador justly to appreciate schemes of public utility. It was, also, a circumstance of some avail to Ralegh, that Sir Ralph was in close union with the Queen, who, in conjunction with the secretary, had formed the rival party to Somerset and to his faction;* for it is evident, from the whole tenour of Anne's conduct to Ralegh, that she was fully sensible of his innocence, and persuaded of the loyalty of his actions and motives. To this favourable disposition, Ralegh, in his letter to Sir Ralph Winwood, on this occasion, makes a pointed allusion, when he observes, that "the wife, the brother, and the son of a King, do not use to sue for men suspect."† Seconded by friends so powerful, and possessing in the Queen one who during the short remainder of her life never forsook him, it might seem that Ralegh's days of prosperity had now returned with renewed freshness; yet never was he in a condition of more imminent peril than at this juncture, when, emerging apparently from obscurity and distress, he hastened into snares which were curiously

* Wilson, p. 698.

† Letter in Cayley, vol. ii. p. 58. See Appendix.

connected with the political concerns and intrigues of the period.

It had ever been a determined project with King James, that the "beams" of his eldest son's greatness should display themselves only in a royal horizon.* The death of Prince Henry had occasioned no change in his plan; for that lamented youth, although far more beloved by the people than the serious and reserved Prince Charles, had never either shared the affections, nor participated in the intimacy, of the King. The inclinations of James were well understood at the Spanish Court, and his hopes perpetually excited of an union between the house of Stuart and the Infanta of Spain, daughter of Philip III. The treaty, however, proceeded but slowly, partly from the natural caution and gravity of the Spanish character, and partly, as it was thought, from a dread which the Spaniards entertained, of renewing a species of bond and alliance, which had proved so disastrous between them in the instance of Henry VIII. and Katharine of Arragon.† It was during this uncertain state of affairs, that Don Diego of Sarmiento, better known in this country by the name of Gondemar, was selected by the Spanish ministry to act as ambassador in England; not,

* Wilson, 702.

† Weldon, 32. See also Lodge's Illustrations, iii. 286.

indeed, without well grounded expectations that his address, vivacity, and consummate effrontery, would work upon the simplicity of James, and reduce him wholly to a conformity with the interests of Spain. Furnished not only with all the requisites of an expert courtier, but with ample means of bribery and corruption, Gondemar soon contrived to bring the most important personages, whether male or female in the court, into a close compact with him, and into a full co-operation with his intrigues. The derelictions from integrity, which were at this time prevalent among the highest officers of state, were both scandalous and appalling; and of these Gondemar knew well how to avail himself; nor was his dangerous influence to be estimated only by the duration of his power. He implanted within the bosom of the court seeds of avarice, and of notions of self-aggrandizement, — the fruits and effects of which were transmitted from father to son; and the boasted ages of James I., and of his son, unduly extolled, as they have been, as an era of private virtue and probity, evince in their annals, corruptions which were nearly, if not wholly unknown, among the English nobility under the capricious, but rigid dominion of the Tudors. So notorious, indeed, were the practices of Gondemar upon the virtue of our courtiers, that, in a few years after his residence in England, there was said not to be a single

courtier who had not tasted of Spanish bounty; and if Cecil himself were exempt, his favourite, the Countess of Suffolk, was permitted by him to reap the profits of his purchased influence — the famous palace of Audley End having been unblushingly erected by the aid of bribes received from the Spanish ambassador.

These, although notorious, are but scanty instances among the numerous collusions of the same nature alluded to by historians.

It was during the height of the Spanish dominion over the king and court, that Ralegh was unhappily induced to bring to maturity his cherished schemes of subduing Guiana. The Spaniards had already looked with jealousy upon his former expeditions, but had either dreaded the displeasure of his early patroness, the formidable Elizabeth, or had discarded the task of frustrating the progress of our colonists in that quarter for more important contests. The renewal of his designs, however, at a time when the influence of the Spanish Court seemed to be fairly established here, was no sooner imparted to the public than it was vehemently opposed by the insidious yet determined Gondemar. Unluckily he had in James a frail vessel upon which to pour the venom of his machinations. The King, on this occasion, conducted himself with a vacillation and pusillanimity verging into deception of the most reprehensible character. He

had, in the first instance, cordially acquiesced in Ralegh's project, and, according to some accounts, had acceded to the release of that oppressed subject the more readily that some remote prospects of wealth and conquest seemed to await his restored exertions. With a degree of treachery which indecision and weakness can account for, but not excuse, he now not only imparted the nature of the whole scheme to Gondemar, but enabled the ambassador to furnish the Spanish monarch with every particular of the intended attack, and consequently with the means of annulling its success.*

Unconscious of these proceedings, Ralegh prepared to venture the last remains of a once ample fortune in the fatal enterprize on which he was intent. The expenses of this expedition were defrayed entirely by himself or by his friends, some few adventurers, chiefly foreigners, being found to share in the undertaking.† The sum of eight thousand pounds, which had been granted by King James as a compensation for the sequestration of Ralegh's valuable estates, was now reclaimed from the Countess of Bedford, to whom it had been lent.‡ The disinterested and devoted Lady Ralegh gave her consent to the sale of an estate belonging to her at

* Biographia. Life of Ralegh.

† Oldys, 193. ‡ Cayley, ii. 61.

Mitcham in Surrey, and valued at two thousand five hundred pounds; a sacrifice by which she was reduced eventually almost to beggary, but which proved her confidence in the good faith of her husband, and her belief both in the practicability of his scheme, and in his intentions of fulfilling his professions regarding Guiana. A commission was also procured through the mediation of Sir Ralph Winwood, constituting Ralegh Admiral of the Fleet, and dated Aug. 26. 1616; but this document was not granted until after he had given the most decided assurances to the government that he had no hostile intentions or piratical designs upon the Spanish settlements; and chiefly, according to the noted declaration of King James, afterwards published, because it "stood with His Majesty's politic and magnanimous courses in these his flourishing times of peace to nourish and encourage noble and generous enterprizes for plantations, discoveries, and opening of new trades." * To this document, the Privy Seal was alone affixed, as King James in his declaration affirmed; yet Ralegh is said to have referred to the authority of the Great Seal in a letter which he dictated to be written relative to his voyage†, and the powers vested in him were both extensive and important.

* Declaration of King James.

† Oldys, 193. Cayley. Appendix. This was a letter

The commission specified, that for the benefit of the subjects of the realm, and the encouragement of others in the "like laudable enterprises, the princely furtherance was given to Sir Walter Ralegh and his friends, with full power to carry for the voyage to Guiana so many of the British subjects, or such as should become British subjects, as should willingly accompany him, with an unlimited supply of arms, ammunition, ships," &c. To these clauses was added the permission to trade in goods and merchandize, and to bring back gold, silver, bullion, and other wares to this country, "for the proper use of Sir Walter Ralegh and his company, reserving to the King and his heirs, one fifth only of such importations." In addition to these powers, Ralegh was authorized to pass to the south or other parts of America; was constituted also general and commander of the enterprize; governor of the new country, and endowed with the privilege of exercising martial law, in a similar manner to the county lieutenants in Eng-

written by Mr. Peter Vanlore, an eminent merchant, to his brother at Amsterdam, in favour of Ralegh's undertaking, entreating him to receive some depositions of importance relative to Guiana, from a merchant of Amsterdam, who required, as the reward of the information which he was able to give, an agreement on the part of Ralegh that he should share the profits of the commodity referred to in the intelligence thus afforded.—Oldys, fol. 193.

land, or to the lieutenant-general of land or sea forces. Respecting this commission, of which an abstract was given subsequently to Ralegh's death in King James's declaration, various reports were circulated; and in particular a statement was made that the words "to our trusty and well-beloved knight, Sir Walter Ralegh," were prefixed; expressions which Ralegh is said to have afterwards pleaded as implying a pardon.* Regarding this important detail the royal declaration is silent; although it gives an abstract of the original commission. It has been well remarked that the disingenuity and artifice of the whole proceeding was manifest in the terms of this abstract; the country which Ralegh was empowered to explore not being even once specified by name, and America alone referred to as the vast and indefinite region of his enterprize. Such was the paltry subterfuge by which James, or his ministers, sought to evade the displeasure of the Spaniards, in the event of hostile measures between Ralegh and the Spanish settlers in Guiana proving eventually necessary.

The sanguine expectations of success

* See Declaration of King James in Oldys, 193, 194, also Birch, i. 68.

† Ralegh's Remains, p. 200. Rapin's History of England, and Tindal's notes.

which Ralegh entertained, appear to have lessened his natural discernment, and to have blinded him to the snares concealed in the apparent liberality of the King's dealings towards him, and to the danger of confiding in a government which had already, upon unsatisfactory evidence and an illegal trial, subjected him to a cruel incarceration. Some misgivings appear to have suggested the notion of a more definite release from his former sentence, than he had hitherto found it possible, or deemed it essential to procure. Assured, to all appearance, of the King's perfect accordance, and even patronage; and trusting in the good faith of a monarch to whom that principle of action was unknown, and who could afterwards avail himself of an informality to depart form the virtual sense of an implied permission, Ralegh was not devoid of a natural apprehension concerning the use to which his enemies might, subsequently, apply any deficiency in the forms of his restoration to an implied equality with his free fellow subjects. As his liberation had been effected by working upon the corruptions of the times, so he now turned his attention to obtaining explicit pardon through the same means. There was in those days but little difficulty in obtaining almost any boon for money, and Ralegh had even a proposal from Sir William

St. John, who had been instrumental in procuring his liberation, to effect his pardon for the sum of £1500. * But being, probably, not in a state to afford such a payment, in addition to the expenses of his projected voyage, Ralegh had recourse to the advice of Lord Bacon, then Lord Keeper, and himself but recently restored to royal favour. Upon the counsels of this profound observer of human nature and its concerns, the ill-fated Ralegh rejected the overture made to him by Sir William St. John. The memorable and distinct assurance of the illustrious Bacon, on this occasion, is related by two contemporary writers, and it exonerates Ralegh from the charge either of indiscretion, or of negligence, in not obtaining the necessary documents. "Sir," said the highly-gifted minister, in reply to his application, "the knee-timber of your voyage is money; spare your purse in this particular; for, upon my life, you have a sufficient pardon for all that is passed already: the King having, under his *broad* seal, made you Admiral of his Fleet, and given you power of the martial law over your officers and soldiers."† This opinion, besides elucidating the opinion of Bacon upon the illegality of the subsequent proceedings against Ralegh, esta-

* Brief relation of Ralegh's troubles. Remains.

† See Howell's Familiar Letters. Oxford Edition of Ralegh's Works, vol. viii. p. 752.

blishes the fact of the original commission having been given under the Great Seal, notwithstanding that it is expressly set down in the King's printed declaration as "per breve de privato sigillo."* But although the advice was consonant, not only with law, but with common sense, the motives of Bacon in affording it have been questioned, and attributed to a servile desire of flattering the King's wishes, by affording James an opportunity of excusing any future prosecution of Ralegh, upon the ground of the sentence of death passed against him in 1603, never having been repealed. Unhappily the character of Bacon authorizes no indignant rejection of surmises too easily reconcileable with the corruption of his conduct, and the unfathomable duplicity of his nature. But, since there is no proof of the charge, no record of any particular benefit which he derived from the counsel, it may be hoped, if not inferred, that Bacon was in this instance innocent of betraying one who trusted in his counsels, and enthusiastically reverenced his talents; one whose labours for the improvement of mankind, sprung, like those of Bacon, in many instances, from the pure sources of patriotism and philanthropy, and raising them both, in that sense, far above the level of the age in which they lived, and the characters by

* Note to Biog.; Life of Ralegh: and Observations on Sanderson's Hist K. James, p. 10.

whom they were surrounded, procured for them memorials of fame independent of the passing history with which they were but temporarily connected, and distinct from the errors by which their conduct in relation to worldly concerns was lamentably sullied.

All preliminaries being arranged, Ralegh, seven months after the date of the royal commission, completed the preparation of his fleet; and on the 28th of March, 1618, began his ill-omened voyage, and sailed down the Thames. In assembling the force with which he prepared to set forth upon this expedition, having had recourse to the aid of several merchant adventurers, he was compelled to accept as his associates, and to collect as his subordinate assistants, men, and even officers, who had never witnessed either land or sea service; and of desperate, or at least disreputable characters, whose friends were happy to procure for them any employment, which for the sum of forty or fifty pounds could retain them abroad for a year; and if not out of mischief, at least in habits of active exertion for some time. The volunteers on this occasion were, therefore, with the exception of forty gentlemen, a disorderly and inefficient assemblage of dissolute and unprofitable persons, whom it was Ralegh's hopeless task to organize, and to stimulate with the same ardent desires as those which animated his own bosom. In describing

these, his companions, Ralegh expresses himself in these characteristic terms: "Their friends," says he, "thought it an exceeding good gain to be discharged of them, at the hazard of some thirty, some forty, or fifty pounds, knowing they could not live so cheap at home."* These valiant characters, stowed, at first, in six different ships, were joined by several others before they left the English coast. Ralegh, in a vessel appropriately named "The Destiny," carrying 440 tons and 36 pieces of ordnance, and built at his own charge, was accompanied by his eldest son as captain, and by two hundred volunteers, eighty of whom were gentlemen, and many of them his relations, the number of whom was afterwards increased.† For the benefit of this motley company, Ralegh, previous to their sailing, published at Plymouth orders to be observed by the several commanders of the fleet and land forces.‡ It is observable, that he who was taxed by the illiberal and uncharitable part of the community in his own day, and who has, in a great measure, been supposed even in the present age to have been coldly affected to religion §, prefaces these regulations with strict

1617.

* Camden's Annals. Ralegh, Apology for his voyage to Guiana, Oxford ed. of his works.

† Cayley, vol. ii. p. 65.

‡ Birch, i. xcvii.

§ See Hume's History of England, reign of James I.

injunctions to begin and close the day with Divine service; enforcing his exhortations with a solemn admonition, by which he reminds them that "no action nor enterprize can prosper (be it by land or sea), without the favour and assistance of Almighty God, the Lord and strength of hosts and armies;" and enjoining them, if there be interruption from foul weather, to perform this important and consolatory duty at least once during the day; "praising God every night with singing of a psalm at the setting of the watch."*

Such was the spirit of his last instructions previous to the commencement of his voyage. If, in directing an immoral and undisciplined crew, he deemed the soothing influence of religious habits efficacious, it is to be hoped that he experienced also, in his own mind, the benign effects of those serious and pious contemplations to which his mind appears to have resorted in the seasons of his heavy afflictions; and which could alone effectually support him in the renewed and overwhelming calamities which it was soon his destiny to encounter.

The very outset of Ralegh's enterprize was inauspicious. It was late in June, or perhaps early in July, before he had fairly put to sea, and, after various disappointments and impedi-

* Ralegh's Apol. in Cayley, vol. ii. p. 84.

ments previous to his voyage, he was obliged by tempestuous weather to take refuge in the harbour of Cork, where he remained until the month of August had nearly elapsed, and was spent in anxiety and inactivity. These disasters were aggravated, if not at the time, at a subsequent period, by reports that he had no intention of going to Guiana, but that he lingered at Plymouth when he had a fair wind; a rumour which was accompanied by the contrary assertion, that he meant to turn pirate, and to return to his country no more. * And a similar accusation was reiterated against his involuntary loss of time in Ireland, which he had no intention of touching when he left England. These disparaging and defamatory statements were attributed by Ralegh to the circumstance of his being in the eye of the law still a culprit, which emboldened all who were disaffected to his interests and service, to spread abroad calumnies which they would not have dared to utter against one who basked in the sunshine of royal favour.† At length, in September, he gained the Canary Islands; in October, those of Cape de Verd; reaching, in November, the continent of South America. In this calamitous passage an accumulation of disasters arrived, which no pen but that of Ralegh could describe in the touching language in which he poured

* Ralegh's Apol. in Cayley, vol. ii. p. 84. † Apology.

forth his sorrows to his anxious and ever-devoted wife.*

In this letter, the first which he addressed to her from Guiana, he describes himself as suffering from the most violent calenture (or fever) for fifteen days, that man ever endured and survived: "but God," he continues, "that gave me a strong heart in all my adversities, hath also now strengthened it in the hell-fire of heat."

During the course of the voyage forty-two persons died of some contagious distemper, and many of the crew were still diseased upon landing at Guiana. Two hundred effective men, however, remained; and, with these, Ralegh expected to advance, provided that the Spaniards had not, upon the information of Gondemar, fortified themselves to resist his approach; a circumstance which, by the tone of his language, he seemed to consider as but too probable. †

In this conjunction of difficulties and of disappointments, he had the satisfaction of being able to assure the anxious mother whom he addressed, that their eldest son, who accompanied him, was in perfect health, and had escaped every distemper whilst enduring the equinoctial heat. This consolatory intelligence

* See Letter to Lady Ralegh, in Ralegh's Remains, duod. 1664.

† Remains, 224.

was soon to be succeeded by tidings of the most afflicting nature, both to him who was destined to communicate, and to her who received the blow which they imparted. Such was the distress, apprehension, and regret, which Ralegh experienced during these early days of his enterprize, that, in desiring to be remembered to two of his friends, he apologized for not addressing himself to them in these afflicting terms; — "I write not to them, for I can write of naught but miseries."* Yet, in the extremity of his suffering, a sanguine temper, and still more, a confidence in the superintendance of that Providence which had permitted him to pass securely the dangers of the ocean, upheld and cheered him. "By the next, I trust, you shall hear better of us: in God's hands we were, and in Him we trust." In the conclusion of his letter, the vanity natural to human nature was apparent, and, with a desire to solace the individual whom he addressed, probably instigated this parting effusion: "To tell you that I might be, here, King of the Indians, were a vanity; but my name hath lived among them: here they feed me with fresh meat, and all that the country yields — all offer to obey me. Commend me to poor Carew, my son." †

But the difficulties and sufferings which Ralegh enumerated in his first letter from Guiana

* Remains, 225. † Ibid. 226.

were far exceeded by others of a far more momentous and poignant character, accounted by him in his narrative to Sir Ralph Winwood, as the greatest misfortunes that ever befel any man. *.

In the first place, the passage from Cape de Verd to America, which was usually in those days accomplished in fifteen or twenty days, was with difficulty made by Ralegh in six weeks, from adverse winds and storms, and the additional inconvenience to the little fleet of losing its water casks and anchors off Bravo, one of the Cape de Verd Islands, upon which it was driven by a hurricane, to the imminent peril of the ships and mariners.

When, at length, the adventurers reached Guiana, many of the bravest men were disabled by sickness, and Ralegh himself, having, as he describes it, been "in the hands of death these six weeks," was carried on shore in a chair, but was received with great kindness and hospitality by such of the Indians as remembered his former voyage.

He now despatched Captain Keymis, who was well acquainted with the country, to sail into the Oronooko in search of the mine, and entrusted him with the command of five small ships, manned with the most valiant portion of the crew and officers, among whom were Lord

* Letter to Winwood, Remains, 226.

North and Lord Mounteagle. The forces of this devoted and enterprizing band were divided into five companies, one of which was commanded by Captain Ralegh, who was destined never to return. Another was conducted by George Ralegh, a nephew of Sir Walter's, who thus ventured his best and dearest connections in the cause, in the success of which he was so nearly interested; and concerning which, he may, without severity, be said to have displayed some degree of infatuation. As the unfortunate adventurers passed up the river, the Spaniards, who had been apprised by intelligence from England of their proceedings, attacked them both with muskets and ordnance. The first assault was, therefore, made on the side of the Spaniards, but the English soon drove them out of St. Thomas, a new town belonging to the Spaniards, and situated on the Oronooko. In this action, the dauntless youth, Walter Ralegh, "more desirous of honour than safety," was killed: "with whom," said the agonized father, "to say truth, all the respects of this world have taken end in me." * Of this event Ralegh was informed by Keymis, in a letter, dated from Oronooko on the 8th of January, and beginning in a manner calculated to excite parental apprehensions. "All things that appertain to human condition," began this veteran companion, "in

* Letter to Winwood.

that proper nature and sense which of fate and necessity belongeth unto them, being now over with your son, maketh me to choose rather, with grief, to let you know from me the certain truth, than uncertain lies from others, which is, viz. — that had not his extraordinary valour and forwardness, (which, with constant vigour of mind, being in the hands of death his last breath expressed in these words, 'Lord have mercy on me, and prosper your enterprize,') led them all on, when some began to pause and recoil shamefully, this action had neither been attempted as it was, nor performed as it is, with this surviving honour."* That the son was worthy of his energetic and dauntless parent may be inferred from this simple account: that he was deeply and incessantly mourned by that parent, is evident from the perpetual and touching allusions which Ralegh, in every narrative of this unhappy affair, makes to his memory and early fate. This part of his history requires, however, no comment. Those, who have been happy enough to escape the severest of all earthly privations, the loss of a child in the bloom and promise of youth, may easily comprehend the extent of his sorrows; those who have encountered a similar calamity, will too readily feel it. The particular details of his son's death were afterwards too soon communicated to Ralegh,

* See Keymis's Letter.

sick, both in body and mind, at Trinidad, where he had promised to await the return of the detachment. The troops commanded by Keymis had departed from Ralegh's instructions in landing near St. Thomas, instead of pursuing, through the country that real or imaginary track which he had designated to them as conducting to the gold mine which they sought. Thus, attacked by the Spaniards, and brought into immediate contact with the governor of the fort, young Ralegh was borne down by the butt-end of a Spanish musket, in the hands of a commander whom he pursued at the head of a company of pikes. The English captain's serjeant quickly revenged the death of his master, by thrusting his halberd into the body of the Spanish officer. Two other officers and the governor himself, fell in the engagement: the inhabitants of St. Thomas took shelter in the market-place, whence they committed great havoc on the assailants, who, in an evil hour, but, as they contended for self-defence, were induced to set fire to the town. The garrison retreated to the woods and mountains, still harassing their English foes, and steadily guarding all avenues to the interior of the country, where, as it was supposed even after Ralegh's death, several valuable mines were situated. *

Of this affair, especially with regard to the

* Birch. i. 78.

share which young Ralegh took in it, various and contradictory accounts were transmitted. It was the current report of the day*, and afterwards asserted by royal proclamation, that this young commander, on leading his soldiers forward to the town, exclaimed, "Come on, my hearts, here is the mine that we expect, they that look for any other are fools."† This anecdote, whether true or false, tends not however to substantiate, as King James infers, the opinion that the mine of Guiana was an airy scheme, uncredited by the followers of Ralegh, and sketched out by him only for the purpose of obtaining liberty to try the ground of enterprize, cherishing at the same time some sinister and unavowed motive. The thoughtlessness of youth, to whom the present time, and the nearest object are ever most important, may have induced the unexperienced and daring officer to tempt his soldiers with the prospect of immediate booty, as most attainable and precious. It is, however, probable, from the silence of Keymis on this point, that the speech was fabricated by some of the many individuals whom Ralegh found reason to regard, even among his own officers, as enemies and calumniators.

On the 18th of January, Keymis prepared to

* Howell's Letters, Oxf. edit. of Ralegh, vol. viii.

† Oldys, note, fol. 203.

proceed to the mine, which was situated, according to report, at the distance of eight miles only from the town. It is remarkable that he saw neither coin nor bullion in St. Thomas, although the principal houses, as he affirms in his letter to Ralegh, were those belonging to gold refiners.* Encouraged by the representations of a Mulatto servant, who had been in the service of the Governor, and who positively described the precise situation of several mines, Keymis, accompanied by three of his principal officers, attempted to land on an unexplored part of the shores of the Oronooko, but was driven back by an ambuscade of Spaniards, with the loss of two of his men, and the complete disablement of one officer. This repulse overpowered the resolution of the captain, who was either inexcusably timid in his military operations, or secretly deficient in confidence with respect to the object which it was his mission to seek. It may readily be supposed that the last inference was too readily drawn by those who had either but little reliance on Ralegh's sincerity, or who had private motives for putting the worst construction on his conduct. The fact of Keymis's desertion of his search, upon a partial success, checked only by a trifling defeat, is indeed remarkable; and if the intentions of a commander of an expedition are always

* Oldys, 204, from Ralegh's Apology, p. 32.

to be estimated by the proceedings of his officers, extremely injurious to Ralegh's reputation.

Struck with panic, or actuated by treachery, Keymis set sail, and proceeded down the river to Punto de Gallo, a port near Trinidad, where Ralegh had awaited his return in the greatest anxiety, both for tidings of his success, and lest the Spanish Fleet which, as he had been apprized, was arrived to attack him, should overwhelm him with its unequal forces during the absence of that portion of his land and sea forces which Keymis commanded. Sickness had enfeebled his men, and impaired his own powers of exertion; and treachery had contaminated his crew. It was his custom, and probably his delight, to go on shore from time to time, to make observations both of a botanical and mineralogical nature; thus refreshing his spirits with the consolatory investigations of Nature's stores, curious, and in many respects bounteous, in that region. In a journal which he wrote of part of this expedition, and which has been preserved in the British Museum amongst the manuscripts of his friend Sir Robert Cotton, Ralegh minutely describes the productions of the country which he, in this manner, industriously explored.* But whilst he was thus beneficially engaged, a rumour that his ships were loaded with treasure to a large amount, tempted a considerable num-

* Titus, B. VIII., Oldys, 204.

ber of his crew to discuss the expediency of leaving him on those shores, a prey to wild beasts, or to the Spaniards, who had already wreaked their vengeance upon some of the English by flaying them alive.* The distress produced in the mind of Ralegh by these various circumstances, received the bitterest aggravation when Keymis, with his detachment, joined him in February at Punto de Gallo, after an absence of two months; a period fraught with events productive of destruction to that unhappy officer himself, and with disgrace and eventual ruin to the unfortunate Ralegh. The intelligence, which Keymis brought, was rendered doubly mortifying by the fact that even on his return down the Oronooko, a chance had been rejected by him of retrieving the honour of the expedition, proposals of the most tempting character having been made to him by some Guaian chiefs who had remembered Ralegh in his former expedition, and who held a part of that country in nominal trust for Queen Elizabeth.† The plea which Keymis made for refusing the assistance of these people was that he apprehended treachery, and collusion with the Spaniards. But Ralegh, to whose ardent mind, this reluctance to incur some portion of risk for the sake of all that could be valuable to a man so pledged and so involved as himself, appeared the basest pusillanimity, contended with justice that

* Oldys, 204. † Ralegh's Apology.

Keymis might have waited till the promised ore, with which the Indians lured them to return, had been brought to their vessels; and he disputed the probability of treachery on the part of these natives, since they had offered to leave six hostages for one. His judgment on this point was possibly correct; unhappily, the fatal error was irreclaimable.

When Ralegh and Keymis met, it was only to receive reproaches and the effusions of keen disappointment on one side, and to pour forth ineffectual excuses on the other. After some days of recrimination and mutual dissatisfaction, Keymis entered Ralegh's cabin, and showing him a letter which he had written to the Earl of Arundel, extenuating his conduct, entreated Ralegh to "allow of his apology." But Ralegh, in the bitterness of his heart, and with a severity to his old companion in arms only to be excused by the poignancy of disappointment, told him that he had undone him by his obstinacy, and that he would not "favour nor colour in any sort his former folly." Keymis asked him "if that were his determination?" to which Ralegh replied that it was his fixed resolution. The unhappy Keymis then said, "I know not then, Sir, what course to take:" and retiring to his cabin shot himself through the ribs, and stabbed himself to the heart. Ralegh, unsuspicious of his design, sent to know who had fired the pistol, when he

was answered by Keymis, lying on his bed, that he had discharged it because it had been long loaded. With this reply Ralegh was satisfied; but half an hour afterwards, a boy going into the cabin, found the wretched officer quite dead, with a long knife plunged into his heart, and a pistol, the first instrument with which he had attempted suicide, lying near him, the bullet having merely broken a rib, and proceeded no farther. The knife, with which the fatal deed was accomplished, was then resorted to for the destructive purpose.*

Of this catastrophe, Ralegh wrote an account to Sir Ralph Winwood, declaring, in the same letter, that if he had not been deserted by some of his captains, he would have left his body at St. Thomas's by his son's, or have brought with him out of that, or other mines so much gold ore as should have satisfied the King. "I propounded," adds he, "no vain thing; what shall become of me I know not: I am unpardoned in England, and my poor estate consumed, and whether any prince will give me bread or no, I know not. I desire your Honour to hold me in your good opinion; to remember my service to my Lord of Arundel and Pembrook; to take some pity on my poor wife, to whom I dare not write for renewing her sorrow for her son; and beseech you to give a copy of this to my Lord Carew:

* Ralegh's Apology in Cayley, ii. 105.

for to a broken mind, a sick body, and weak eyes, it is a torment to write many letters."* To Lady Ralegh, he shortly afterwards addressed a letter, the model of such compositions for simplicity, tenderness, and deep feeling, both for him he had lost, and for her, the unhappy maternal survivor of a gallant and promising youth.†

It was now determined in a council of war, that Ralegh and his fleet should return to Newfoundland, to repair and clean the ships. It was, however, deemed necessary by Ralegh, to send home several disaffected persons, described in his own pithy terms as "good for nothing, neither by sea nor by land," under the charge of one of the many relatives who accompanied him. On arriving at Newfoundland, mutiny broke out among his men, some of whom inclined to remaining aboard, whilst others were clamorous for returning home. It was afterwards affirmed in the King's declaration, that Ralegh offered his own ship, which was of great value, to any of the company, if they would set him in a French bark; and that he repeated the same proposition when arrived on the coast of Ireland, being "loth," as he said, "to put his head under the King's girdle." He took, however, the part most creditable to his innocency, and most fatal

* Ralegh's Remains, 234. † Ibid. 285.

to his earthly career, and returned to the British dominions.

The intelligence of Ralegh's disasters were first conveyed to James, by Captain John North, the brother of Lord North, who had accompanied the expedition to Guiana, and who was greatly esteemed by Ralegh for his valour, and fidelity, in that luckless undertaking. These tidings were transmitted to the English Monarch on the 13th of May, 1618.* They arrived at an epoch when James's anticipations of a marriage between the Prince Charles, and the second daughter of the King of Spain, were at their height; when the Queen, Anne of Denmark, the firm, and to the last, the unalterable friend of Ralegh†, was suspected to be insane; whilst Gondemar, whose private sentiments on the subject are fully exemplified in a letter from him, in French, preserved in the Sancroft Collection, still remained in the English Court, to flatter James with proposals for the arrangement of the marriage articles, and to exclaim against the infringement of the treaty between Spain and England, which he declared to have been manifested by Ralegh's plunder of St. Thomas. It was, indeed, obvious to all observers of the strange events of the day, that Ralegh, who had

* Camden's Annals.

† Letter from Hearne's Hemingford. See Oxford edit. of Ralegh's Works.

formerly been accused of a treasonable co-operation with the emissaries of Spain, was now on the eve of being sacrificed to her resentments. Gondemar, as it was remarked by a contemporary, "would never give him over until he had his head off his shoulders."* The chief apprehensions entertained by the Spanish Government, related to the interception of their conquests, and the injury of their trade and property in the West Indies; and Gondemar had already given such a colouring to the exploits of Ralegh, as the forcible and invidious repetition of the word "pirate," in the presence of James, could convey.† Meanwhile the King congratulated himself on the success of his manœuvres, in not permitting to his adventurous subject the benefit of his royal pardon, by which any future proceedings against him would have been involved in considerable difficulty. For by a private assurance to Ralegh, previous to his departure for Guiana, he had pledged himself to keep his projects secret, if Ralegh would confide them to him; an intimation being conveyed to him before his exit from the Tower to that effect, of which a written document was afterwards, by some means, transmitted to the Spanish Ministers.‡ Thus the weak policy of James was,

* Howell's Letter to Sir J. Crofts, viii. 783.

† Ibid. vol. viii. p. 747.

‡ Howell's Letters, Ralegh's Works, viii. 750.

in this instance defeated; and, whilst resolving to sacrifice Ralegh to the vengeance of Spain, he was obliged, as it afterwards proved, to have recourse to the sentence formerly passed, concerning the communications held by Ralegh with the agents of that country.

Previous to Ralegh's arrival on the coast of Ireland, whither he first bent his course on his return to England, opinions in his native country differed widely as to the nature of his alleged piracies, and the degrees of legal guilt to be affixed to his adventurous proceedings. By his friends, his services, his sufferings, and his heavy expenses in his voyage, were earnestly proclaimed. Even those who were compaartively indifferent to his safety, contended that the plundering of St. Thomas was an act committed beyond the equator, where the articles of peace between Spain and England do not extend *: and the first intelligence of the action was communicated to King James with great caution, and with much pathetic description, by Captain North, and all aggravation of the circumstances avoided.

But this forbearance was unavailing, and the obstinate and implacable conduct of James, after the first announcement of Ralegh's disasters, and the subserviency of his ministers and courtiers, were all fully explained in the course of the sum-

* Howell's Letters, Ralegh's Works, viii. 750.

mer, when Gondemar sailed in July for Spain, bearing with him the articles of the proposed marriage between Prince Charles and his intended Spanish bride.* Accordingly, an immoderate degree of haste was manifested in the proceedings against the unfortunate object of Spanish vengeance, a proclamation against him being issued by the King on the 11th of June, some weeks previous to his landing in England.† By this measure, the King's "utter dislike and detestation of the violences and excesses," said, by Gondemar's report, to have been committed upon the territories of his "dear brother of Spain," were strongly put forth; and all persons who could supply information upon the subject, were exhorted upon their "duty and allegiance" to repair to the Privy Council to make known their "whole knowledge and understanding concerning the same."‡

Meanwhile conjectures varied with regard to the probability of Sir Walter's return — the world, wondering, as a contemporary expresses it, that "so great a wise man as Sir Walter Ralegh would return to cast himself on so inevitable a rock as it was to be feared he would." In despite of this wonderment, Ralegh, after touching with his dilapidated ships and dispirit-

* Cayley, ii. 145.

† Cayley, 137, from Rymer's Fœdera, xvii. p. 92.

‡ Ibid. § Howell.

ed companions at Kingsale in Ireland, arrived in Plymouth in the beginning of July, and resolved to surrender himself immediately into the hands of those who were commissioned by the King to apprehend him. Whether this act were the effect of a high sense of honour, and of justice to his own character; whether it arose from desperation, or proceeded from a fatal reliance upon the goodness of his cause, are points upon which considerable doubt must always rest. His conduct on this mournful occasion, is, however, decisively in favour of his innocence with respect to the charges brought against him, of having purposed merely to accumulate wealth in his expedition to Guiana, without any intention of returning to his country. Fortunately he was accompanied, during his journey from Plymouth to London, the last which he ever made, by an old companion in service, Captain Samuel King, who has left a succinct account of the intentions and measures pursued by his unfortunate commander, from his arrival in the harbour of Plymouth to his final entrance into London. *

By the narrative of this veteran it appears, that Ralegh on hearing, before he landed, of the royal proclamation against him, instantly

* Oldys, 209. The narrative of King has never been published, but it was seen, and carefully followed by Oldys.

determined upon the step which appeared to him most honourable and expedient, and, that his intentions might be clearly shown, sent his sails ashore, and moored his ship, immediately after touching shore himself. Thus, after a year's absence, regaining the coast of his native land, and of his beloved Devonshire, only to renew the distresses, and to be the object of persecutions which seemed, during his later years, to constitute his destiny; or, to speak the language of those who trust in the consoling belief of a superintending power, to fill up the cup of afflictions which Providence had assigned to him.

It was Ralegh's fate, not only to endure the malice of the world, but to receive its sharpest stings by the immediate agency of persons from whom he might reasonably have expected neutrality, if not fidelity and attachment. On his first attainder, it was Cobham, his once familiar associate, who pointed the venomed shafts of falsehood against him. On his last imprisonment, it was a kinsman, Sir Lewis Stucley, who not only undertook for a liberal reward to apprehend him, but inflicted an injury even more serious, by calumnious misrepresentations of his conduct during his charge of the illustrious prisoner. Stucley, who was at this time vice-admiral of Devon, met afterwards with some portion of retribution from the avoidance and

opprobrium of the world. Unhappily, it is not to such minds as his, that the loss of honour conveys its severest stings. Coveting the accumulation of wealth, he "had his reward;" and probably felt not the punishment which the justice of civilized society might be supposed to inflict. Meanwhile the sanguine nature of Ralegh's disposition inclined him still to rely upon mercy, which never was to be extended to him, or upon justice, of which there was but the name, during the prevalence of Spanish gold, and the influence of Spanish intrigues at the English court. He heard, indeed, reports concerning Gondemar's continuance in London solely with the intention to effect his ruin, yet he continued firm to his first resolution. Gondemar departed, however, from London, three weeks before the arrival of Ralegh there, but not before he had placed affairs in such a train as best suited his instructions: it has been also stated by some authors that in addition to the incentives occasioned by motives of national policy, he had those of private dislike and malignity towards Ralegh, to heighten the eagerness with which he pursued his suit.* Yet, this expert diplomatist was unable wholly to succeed, even with the "Caledonian Solomon," whose heart he is said to have beguiled with his tales and witticisms, without employing the agency of

* Oldys, 210.

bribes and presents, with which he effectually plied the English courtiers before he bade farewell to their country.*

It was in vain, therefore, that Ralegh addressed to the misguided and prejudiced monarch upon whose mercy he had cast himself, a letter, replete with sound argument in favour of his innocence and loyalty.* This address, after enumerating the aggravations received from the Spaniards by the English, and the precedents of retaliation on the part of our countrymen, concludes with this eloquent appeal to the compassion, and justice of the King:—"If I have spent my poor estate, lost my son, suffered by sickness, and otherwise a world of hardships; if I have resisted with manifest hazard of my life, the robberies and spoils with which my companions would have made me rich; if, when I was poor, I could have made myself rich; if when I had gotten my liberty, which all men and nature itself do much prize, I voluntarily lost it; if, when I was sure of my life, I rendered it again; if I might elsewhere have sold my ship and goods, and put five or six thousand pounds in my purse, and yet brought her into England; I beseech your Majesty to believe that all this I have done, because it should not be said that your Majesty had given liberty and trust to a man whose

* Oldys, 210, note.

† Ralegh's Remains, duod.

end was but the recovery of his liberty, and who had betrayed your Majesty's trust."

This simple exposition of Ralegh's motives, was followed by an act equally honourable to him, — the commencement of his journey to the metropolis. Before, however, he could reach Ashburton, a town twenty miles from Plymouth, he was arrested by Sir Lewis Stucley, who in the eagerness of an obsequious and interested courtier, commenced operations previous to the receiving his commission from the King. The address of this man to Ralegh, contained the intimation that he had orders for arresting him and his ship; "a falsehood, which was received with calmness, and answered, by Ralegh's informing him that he had saved him that trouble, and done it to his hand."* They returned together to Plymouth, and lodged at the house of Sir Christopher Harris, where Ralegh was so ill guarded by Stucley, that he sometimes failed to see him for two or three days. In this interval, the operations of fear, and the temptations induced by that love of life and liberty incident to human nature, excited in the unfortunate Ralegh a strong desire to make one desperate effort for the recovery of freedom. With this view, he prevailed upon his friend, Captain King, to procure him a bark to convey him to France, and paid as it was stated, twelve

* Oldys, 12., from King.

crowns for the passage, pretending that it was a gentleman known to him, who desired to pass into that country.* The vessel was detained four days at anchor beyond the limits to which the authority of the Plymouth garrison extended, but Ralegh never ascended her deck: for although one night he had certainly resolved to avail himself of this resource, procured a small boat to convey him and his faithful companion, King, to the ship, and had actually proceeded some distance towards the object of his destination, he altered his resolution, and returned; deeming it perhaps better to risk the event of renewed persecutions, than to incur dishonour, and reproach, by flight. Yet, even the severest judges could scarcely have censured one who had suffered so mercilessly, for ensuring his own safety, and avoiding a fresh encounter of shameless injustice and oppression. Ralegh returned to a tyrannical master, and to an unthankful country; and he would have been amply justified in escaping from the snares prepared for his destruction. But, whether induced by heroism which we must admire yet regret; or actuated by fears of the consequences which might accrue to his family; or influenced by a fatal reliance upon the faith of James, who had not only virtually but literally authorized his expedition; he

* Oldys apud King. Declaration of King James, Cayley, ii. 434. Appendix.

did return, and unsuspected of any design of escape, after engaging the vessel for one night more, relinquished all thought of emigration.

Such is the account given of his movements by Captain King, who has established his own veracity by the bold avowal of the share which he took in promoting Ralegh's hastily abandoned schemes. It was, however, asserted in the royal apology for Ralegh's wrongs *, that the darkness of the night frustrated their plans; a statement which is refuted by King's allegation, that if Sir Walter had been willing to have rowed a quarter of a mile further, they might have met the bark. Besides, as he remarks, if that night would not have served, one of the other three would have been available for the proposed flight, the wind being fair, and the tide falling out conveniently.

Stucley having at length received his commission, prepared to set out with his prisoner, whom he was instructed not to hasten more than his health would permit. One Mannourie, a Frenchman, was added to their travelling suite, an acquisition apparently intended for the accommodation of Ralegh, but eventually contributing to his destruction.

Ralegh was now joined by his wife, and was received on his journey at the houses of several of his friends and acquaintance, from whom he speedily learned the machinations of his enemies

* See the King's Declaration, in Cayley, ii. 434.

at court. He now, too late, regretted that he had allowed the season for retreat to pass away, lamenting it to Lady Ralegh, and to King, who told him, "that he could blame no one but himself," for his resolution to continue in England.* But, upon the arrival of a messenger to expedite his journey to the metropolis, his mind became agitated, and eager for a fresh project of escape until the influence of Spain and the fury of his enemies should have subsided, after the fashion of political rancour and of political factions. Yet he still, as his veteran companion asserted, declared, that "no misery should make him disloyal to his king and his country." And never, even in the extremity of desperation, was he heard to name His Majesty but with a degree of respect which James can hardly be thought to have merited.

In pursuance of the project which he now seriously meditated, Ralegh, on arriving at Salisbury, where the King had recently been on his progress, despatched Captain King to London to provide a boat at Tilbury, desiring him to employ on this occasion, a man named Cotterell, who had been in Ralegh's service. When King arrived in London, he was, however, prevailed upon by Cotterell to entrust a boatswain of his, named Hart, with the office of furnishing a

* Oldys, 213.

wherry. King unguardedly complied with this advice, proffered the perfidious boatswain thirty pieces of silver for his assistance and secrecy, and paid him, for some time, to keep the boat in readiness at Tilbury. By Hart the whole scheme was however disclosed and eventually frustrated. On the 7th of August, Ralegh arrived in London, whence he was anxious to proceed to Tilbury on the same night, but was told by King that the arrangements for his departure were not completed. And now the intelligence of his schemes having transpired, Stucley was empowered by his employers to tamper with Ralegh by feigning acquiescence in those plans, without, himself, incurring suspicion or reproof. The object of thus ensnaring him whose ruin was already determined, was to justify his seizure to the public; to become effectually possessed of any private documents which he might carry about him, and to certify to the world his intention to escape.* Meanwhile Ralegh had received offers from the agent of the French king to furnish him with a bark, and other means of assistance in his escape, a proposal which he declined upon the plea of the French vessel not being in readiness. Thus he again missed an opportunity of flight, from which it is more than probable the machin-

* Oldys, 118.

ations of his enemies could not have detained him.

On Sunday the 9th of August, Sir Walter repaired to a certain place of rendezvous on the Thames, appointed by Captain King, who awaited him there with two wherries. He was accompanied by Sir Lewis Stucley, and by his son, young Stucley, whom Ralegh was credulous enough to believe interested in the success of his scheme. His sole attendant was a page. The unfortunate and persecuted prisoner was disguised with a false beard, wearing a hat with a green hat-band. He had provided merely a cloak-bag and four pistols, which were put into the boat. The traitor Stucley then asked the anxious friend of Ralegh, Captain King, this suspicious question, whether "he had not distinguished himself an honest man?" To this enquiry King returned the cautious answer, "that he hoped he would continue so."

After the party had entered the boats and had rowed some paces, they were informed by the watermen that Mr. Herbert, to whom Hart had revealed the plot, was also on the river, and in pursuit of them. This intelligence excited Ralegh's fears; but he was re-assured by Stucley, who threatened to kill the watermen if they did not proceed, and feigned concern at having ventured his fortunes and safety with a man so

full of doubts and apprehensions as Ralegh. As they approached Greenwich, the sudden glimpse of a boat again inspired Ralegh with suspicions of treachery and pursuit, but King persuaded him to proceed, with assurances of reaching Tilbury in safety. But in these delays the serving of the tide was disregarded, until the watermen declared it to be impossible to arrive at Gravesend till morning. Upon hearing of this disaster Ralegh was almost resolved to land at Purfleet, an idea which was encouraged both by Hart and by Stucley; the former promising to procure him horses to Tilbury, and the latter offering to carry the cloak-bag for the distance of half-a-mile after landing: but the faithful and cautious Captain King negatived the proposal, assuring Ralegh that if they could not reach Gravesend by water, it were impossible to compass that distance by land, in the dead of night, and without the certainty of procuring horses.

During these debates they passed Woolwich; and now Ralegh became fully sensible of the dangers by which he was assailed, although he was still ignorant of the treachery by which those perils were contrived, and directed to his ruin. After encountering several small boats, it became evident to him that they contained the emissaries of Herbert, whom he had been instructed to consider as commissioned by James

to apprehend him. He still, however, confided in Stucley, who kept up the appearance of friendly interest in his escape, promising to return with him to his own house, and embracing his deluded prisoner with an affection of regard which put the finishing touches to the character of this accomplished villain. The betrayed and the betrayer retraced their watery way to Greenwich, where, Stucley pretending that he dared not carry Ralegh farther, they landed. Here they encountered the boats which had before alarmed Ralegh, and which now proved to be full of men in the service of Mr. William Herbert, and of Sir William St. John, who had formerly procured Ralegh's liberation on the payment of a sum of money. As Captain King, with his unfortunate master, passed over Greenwich Bridge, Stucley made an attempt upon the fidelity of King, advising him to appear to the world to concur in the plot for delivering Ralegh into the hands of his enemies. But this proposal was rejected with indignation by the gallant officer, who was immediately arrested by Stucley, and committed to the charge of two of Herbert's men. The party entered a tavern, in which King heard Ralegh utter this calm but expressive reproach to the contemptible Stucley. "Sir Lewis, these actions will not turn out to your credit." On the ensuing day Ralegh was conducted to the Tower; and on entering this well-known edifice he observed to

King that he "was himself the mark shot at," but that King need not apprehend the consequences of this affair. The dejected and disappointed officer was then obliged to take a last farewell of the master for whom he had risked so much; leaving him, as he touchingly expressed it, in the guardianship of that Providence "with whom," said he, "I do not doubt but his soul resteth."

Such was the tissue of treachery, coarsely contrived, and carelessly executed, by which the final destruction of Ralegh was effected. That he could rush into a snare prepared with so little address, would excite surprise, were it not remembered how often desperation unnerves the strongest, and blinds the most acute minds. A species of fatality, as the superstitious may consider it, seems, indeed, to have involved the last years of Ralegh's existence. His resolution appears to have wavered, and his credulity to have preponderated over the caution which his situation peculiarly required. When it would be probable and natural that he should, from mournful experience, distrust all men, he accorded his confidence to those whose deeds were equivocal, and whose worldly interests might be promoted by his ruin. The vivid perceptions of that mind which could investigate the concerns of past ages, and dive into those of the future with almost prophetic scan, were obscured when his own immediate and important affairs were pressed

upon him by emergencies, which, whilst they almost broke a heart worn out with contending emotions, weakened the faculties of an understanding, such as few men could boast of possessing.

But the tragedy of Ralegh's life was now nearly drawing to a conclusion, and the repose of the grave, purchased by the agonies of an ignominious death, was soon to be his portion. On the 10th of August, he had again been consigned as a prisoner to that gloomy residence with which he was already but too well acquainted. It is probable that he was here joined by Lady Ralegh, although that fact has not been specifically mentioned; yet she who had followed him in his good and ill fortunes was little likely to desert him in the last extremity.

A committee was, in a few days, appointed to examine into the details and motives of Ralegh's intended flight, which was decried as an heinous offence, and as a distrust of the King's mercy never to be forgiven by the royal personage, whose *mercies*, as they were called, had been formerly so graciously extended.* Yet considerable interest was still exerted for one whose sufferings and whose services were, in the minds of the impartial, the sources of commiseration and subjects of praise. The Queen, with a generous earnestness which redeems the frivolity

* Oldys, 221.

of her character, wrote to the Villiers, now Marquis of Buckingham, whom she addressed as her "kinde dogge," entreating him, as she had any favour or credit with him, "to let her have a trial of it at this time, in dealing earnestly and sincerely with the King, that Sir Walter Ralegh's life might not be called in question." *

Lord Carew, the relative, and constant friend of Ralegh, had already, on his knees, interceded with the King in his behalf, but was answered by the remark from His Majesty, "that it were as well to hang him as deliver him to the King of Spain, who assuredly would;" and "one of these two things he must do if the case were as the Spanish ambassador had represented it." And when Lord Carew still entreated for mercy, he was dismissed with the observation, that "the most he could expect was that the King would give him a hearing." † But, whilst Ralegh's friends earnestly desired a legal investigation into his case, and confidently expected that he would make his cause good, they anticipated not the perversion of law, and the departure from every principle of equity by which that promised enquiry was to be characterized, and the fate of the object of their solicitude determined.

Ralegh now resolved to take his cause into his own hands; but though few pens could

* Cayley, ii. 137. † Ibid.

plead so effectually as his, his representations appear not to have received the slightest encouragement in this instance. To the Marquis of Buckingham, he, with a delicacy suitable to a mind so accomplished as his, apologized for presuming to address "so great and worthy a person, who had been told that he had done him some wrong. I heard of it," he continues, "but of late; but most happy had I been if I might have disproved that villainy against me, when there had been no suspicion that the desire to save my life had presented my excuse." *

It is observable that in Ralegh's letters, in many of which he had, unhappily, to plead for life, or to sue for justice, there prevails a becoming tone of humility and supplication, free from abject flattery or from undignified lamentation. In the document now referred to, containing his last appeal to the intercession of Buckingham, he justifies himself with a clearness and manliness, distinct from the petulance of a rash and arrogant adventurer, and devoid of presumption. In all his written communications, whether addressed to the great, to his intimate associates, or to the beloved members of his family, there pervades the true spirit of an accomplished English gentleman. The mind fondly dwells upon certain attributes of his cha-

* Cayley, ii. 143, from Harleian Coll.

racter, and, with the more tenacity and regret, as we approach the close of so much excellence, the destruction of such attainments, greater, and more brilliant in the mournful sun-set of Ralegh's existence, than in his meridian of glory.

In his explicit justification of his projected escape, Sir Walter avows to Villiers, that "it was the last severe letter from the lords for the bringing of him up, and the impatience of dishonour, that put him first in fear of his life, or enjoying it in a perpetual imprisonment, never to recover his reputation lost, which strengthened me," he proceeds to say, "in my late, and too late lamented resolution, if His Majesty's mercy do not abound; if His Majesty do not pity my age, and scorn to take the extreme and utmost advantage of my errors; if His Majesty, in his his great charity, do not make a difference between offences proceeding from a life-saving natural impulsion, without an ill intent, and those of an ill heart."

No reply to this letter has been transmitted to us; and it is but too probable that the exertions of the young and prosperous courtier to whom it was addressed, were not extended to sustain a cause so weak, and almost hopeless, as that of Ralegh. Meanwhile the commissioners who were appointed to examine him, were unable even in the most minute exercise of their office, and in their daily visits to the Tower, to extract

from the depositions of his late companions in his voyage, any evidence of treasonable designs, or of piratical practices.* At the end of the King's "Declaration of the Demeanour and Carriage of Sir Walter Ralegh," &c. the names of these commissioners are supposed to have been annexed†; and if that conjecture be correct, their testimony to the truth of the charges contained in that publication is implied. The allegations which James, in the fulness of royal dignity, deemed it expedient to publish, by way of apology, after the death of his victim, were neither adduced during the life of Ralegh, nor supported by any credible witness after the termination of his career. The tenor of the Declaration, is, in fact, so much inflated by exaggeration, and its details have so greatly the air of invention, that little importance would have been annexed to it as historical evidence, had it not been for the strange, and, apparently, careless credence afforded to it by one of the most eminent and elegant of historians.‡ The deductions which he derives from it are amply refuted, as far as they relate to the expedition itself, by a simple reference to Ralegh's Apology for his last Voyage to Guiana §, a narrative which might have been contradicted by the united testimony of his whole crew and officers, had they been

* Oldys, 222.
† Ibid.
‡ Hume.
§ Cayley, ii. 83.

disposed or able to disprove the truth of his statements. The alleged details of Sir Walter's conduct after his return to England, deserve even less consideration by the enquirers into historical truth, than his motives and actions during the period of his absence from this country. These particulars rest chiefly upon upon the testimony of Mannourie, the French empiric, whom the insidious Stucley engaged to accompany him at Plymouth, under pretext of his attending to Ralegh's health, and affording him the alleviation of his advice. It is sufficient here to state the heads of those calumnies which Mannourie, doubtless by the influence of some lucrative advantage, was instigated to produce against his patient. How far they were rebutted or acknowledged by Ralegh, will appear upon his trial.

In Mannourie's depositions it is stated, that Sir Walter had persuaded the quack to administer to him medicines in order to bring on the appearances of violent and dangerous disease. This feint was attributed to the desire which he naturally felt to gain time, and to be permitted to remain at his own residence in London, whence he might easily effect his escape. The account of this alleged stratagem is given with much circumlocution, and with many frivolous and even disgusting details. It is almost incredible that Sir Walter should have laid him-

self open to a man of whom he knew but little, in the manner which Mannourie describes. It is likewise incredible that he should have had recourse to the desperate and absurd contrivances which Mannourie describes him to have adopted. They were, however, adduced not only as proofs of conscious guilt; but as deeds of guilt in themselves, as "impostures" "declining His Majesty's goodness," and thus rendering himself unworthy of His Majesty's farther mercy. The question may, however, be asked — why, if sufficient evidence could have been adduced against Ralegh of fresh schemes against government, his former sentence was, as we shall find, revived, in order to give a colour of justice to his condemnation? It was, however, pretended, "that his former attainders for treason being the highest and last work of the law," His "Majesty was enforced, (except attainders should become privileges for all subsequent offences,) to resolve to have him executed upon his former attainder." *

The council, after deliberating for some time, were unable to recommend a fresh trial, either on the grounds of Ralegh's attack upon Guiana, or on the feebler allegations against him. The first mode of impeachment would have acknowledged a cession of the English interest in the province of Guiana to Spain; the latter was

* King's Declaration, in Cayley, ii. 446.

totally unsupported except by the evidence of Mannourie and Stucley, both now the objects of popular suspicion, and, eventually, of universal odium and contempt.

On the 23d of October, a discussion took place in the Privy Council with regard to the mode in which prisoners condemned for treason, and set at liberty, could be legally executed. In this conference, at which all the judges were present, it was determined to send a Privy Seal to the Judges of the King's Bench, commanding "them to proceed against Ralegh according to law." * On the ensuing day he received notice from the commissioners to prepare for death. He was, at this time, ill of an aguish complaint, which he had, probably, incurred in Guiana, in which such diseases are prevalent. From the hot stage of this disease, the unhappy man was aroused, on the 28th of October, at eight o'clock in the morning, and conveyed to the Court of King's Bench in Westminster, being taken thither by writ of habeas corpus. An account of the proceedings against him has been preserved in the Harleian Collections, and other authentic sources, and transmitted through the medium of the State Trials.

In the last process against him a writ was first read, purporting, "that whereas Sir Walter being long before in the presence of divers noble

* Oldys, from Hutton's Reports.

personages, legally convicted of high treason at Winchester, was then and there adjudged to be hanged, drawn, and quartered." After going through this form, the attorney-general rose to make the expected harangue upon the case. The person on whom this office fell was Henry Yelverton, a man of reputed honour, who had been raised to his present eminence by Car, Earl of Rochester, but was destined to experience himself the vicissitudes of fortune, through the agency of Buckingham, whose corruptions Yelverton afterwards attempted to oppose.* It is melancholy to reflect, that a man of probity and of extensive legal acquirements should have been induced or constrained, by his prosecution of Ralegh, if not to violate the laws of his country, at least to infringe upon the spirit of equity in which those laws are in most instances dictated. But Yelverton, redeeming his character by his subsequent conduct, by his resistance to certain patents which Buckingham desired to grant, was, like the oppressed individual in whose ruin he now concurred, doomed to experience the terrors and anxieties of imprisonment, being afterwards committed to the Tower, and deprived of his office for a time, although eventually restored to more than his former honour. His speech was concise, and consisted in a mere formal ex-

* Wilson, 734.

position of the case, tending rather to compliment, than to confound, and vilify the unhappy prisoner. Invective was now unnecessary, and even Coke's vituperations would, perhaps, have been silenced by the defenceless nature of Ralegh's situation, by his infirmities, and broken spirits, and by the contemplation of one so gifted and one so favoured, humbled beneath the very feet of those above whom he rose proudly superior in intellectual eminence. Even Yelverton could not, in his address, forbear describing him as a man, "who, in regard of his parts and quality, was to be pitied." "Sir Walter Ralegh," he continued, "in his time, was a star; yea, and of such nature, that shineth fair; but out of the necessity of state, like stars when they trouble the sphere, must indeed fall." *

Sir Walter was then asked what he should say for himself, why execution should not be awarded against him? He first replied, by apologising for the weakness of his voice by reason of his late sickness, and an ague, in the access of which he had been brought before their tribunal. He also requested the accommodation of pen and ink.

Being told by Sir Henry Montague, the Lord Chief Justice, that "his voice was audible enough," he then proceeded. His expostula-

* Note in Oldys, 224.

tions with the court were put forth with that moderation and judgment which he well knew how to call to his aid upon important occasions. He told his judges, that with respect to his former sentence, he had conceived himself to be discharged of it, when it had been His Majesty's pleasure to grant him a commission to proceed on a voyage beyond the seas, wherein he had power, as marshal, over the life and death of others. As he proceeded to descant upon the circumstances of his voyage to Guiana, he was checked by the Lord Chief Justice, who informed him that his commission could not in any way help him, and did not imply a pardon; and that "there was no word tending to pardon in all his commission;" "therefore," continued he, "you must say something else to the purpose, otherwise we must proceed to give execution." *

Upon perceiving the hopelessness of his case, Ralegh forbore further argument, and, throwing himself on the mercy of the King, said, that with respect to his former judgment, some "present could witness, nay, his Majesty was of opinion, that he had hard measure therein."

This appeal, though of course unavailing, was answered in a tone of moderation, and with a degree of humane consideration, which proved

* Cayley, ii. 153.

how greatly public opinion had been altered in his favour since his trial. It was, however, thought necessary to assure him that he had had an "honourable trial," and was justly convicted: he was recommended to submit himself, and to confess that his offence had justly drawn his former judgment upon him. He was told, that for the last fifteen years he had been as a dead man in the law, and might in any moment have been cut off; that new offences had now "stirred up his Majesty's justice" to revive what the law had formerly cast upon him. "I know," continued Montague, "you have been valiant and wise; and I doubt not but you retain both these virtues, for now you shall have occasion to use them. Your faith hath heretofore been questioned, but I am resolved you are a good Christian, for your book, which is an admirable work, doth testify as much. I would give you counsel, but I know you can apply unto yourself far better than I am able to give you; yet will I, with the good neighbour in the Gospel, (who finding one wounded and distressed, poured oil into his wounds and refreshed him,) give unto you the oil of comfort, in respect that I am a minister of the law, mixed with vinegar. Sorrow will not avail you in some kind; for were you pained, sorrow would not ease you; were you afflicted, sorrow would not relieve you; were you tormented, sorrow would not content you; and

yet the sorrow for your sins would be an everlasting comfort to you." With these, and similar exhortations, too easily offered to others, too hardly applied to oneself, perhaps well meant, yet tampering, as it were, with the grief they were intended to subdue, the Lord Chief Justice concluded the proceedings by declaring that "execution was granted." No supplications for life, no base confessions with a view to conciliate pardon, no abject, flattering encomiums of the King's wonted mercy, were heard from the prisoner; greater, perhaps, in this state of unjust condemnation, than in prosperity. He begged merely not to be cut off so suddenly, for that he "had something to do in discharge of his conscience, something to satisfy the world in;" and he "desired to be heard at the day of his death." In requesting this leisure he besought them not to consider that he craved one minute of life, for being now old, sickly, in disgrace, and certain of death, life was wearisome to him. He said, with an emphasis almost approaching to sublimity, that he never was disloyal to His Majesty, which he should prove where he should not fear the face of any king on earth. He concluded his address by beseeching that he might have their prayers, and was then conveyed under charge of the sheriffs to the Gate-house in Westminster, near the Palace Yard.

The King was now in Hertfordshire, on his

progress, yet the warrant for Ralegh's execution was produced immediately after the passing of the sentence, dated the same day, signed, and directed to the Lord Chancellor Verulam. The mode of execution was changed from hanging to that of beheading only, a commutation of his sentence which Ralegh, it may be remembered, had earnestly solicited at his former condemnation. The time for which he had petitioned on the plea of both temporal, and eternal concerns, was not however granted. James, who had absented himself from the close of the mournful tragedy which he permitted to disgrace the annals of his reign, was fearful, probably, of the explosion of popular indignation. Apprehensions of this nature probably hastened the death of Ralegh. Perhaps, in mercy, suspense, which often shakes the strongest minds, was not added to the other trials which the illustrious sufferer had to encounter. The bitterness of death was past when its certainty was pronounced. That, which to the happy, and to the sanguine, might be a close to enjoyment and to hope, was to the sorrowing father, the disappointed patriot, the subject bereaved of liberty, and loaded with disgrace, the commencement of a brighter existence, and the harbinger of peace. Happily for Ralegh's fame, and still more happily for his peace, his mind could rally under the pressure of severe calamities, and was aroused

to exertions admirable to others, and conferring comfort to his own breast, by the presence of powerful excitements, whether of joy, or of grief. By the regulation of his feelings, and, it may be trusted, the elevation of his thoughts to that source whence grace to the pure and contrite is never asked in vain, he was enabled to reply to the sorrowing observations of his friends in a manner worthy of a Christian philosopher. "The world," he calmly observed, "was but a large prison, out of which some were daily selected for execution."

Dr. Robert Tonson, Dean of Westminster, and afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, who was commanded by the Council to be with him, found him not only resigned, but a man most fearless of death that ever was known; and the most resolute and confident, yet with reverence and conscience. When this divine endeavoured to console him, he heard from the object of his solicitude that "he had never feared death;" and much less then, for it was but an opinion and imagination; and the manner of death, though to others it might seem grievous, yet he had rather die so than of a burning fever." And when the conscientious and assiduous minister of the gospel sought to probe into his soul, and to discover whether that which the condemned man described as religious confidence and peace, might not be the effect of presumption, or of

vain-glory, he was assured by Ralegh of his conviction that "no man that knew God, and feared him, could die with cheerfulness and courage except he were assured of the love and favour of God towards him."

On the day of his execution he received the communion, and was "very cheerful and merry," expressing himself to Dr. Townson, full of hopes that he should, at his death, convince the world of his innocence. He never touched upon the grounds of his first trial, but asserted his innocence of the charges latterly brought against him.

On the morning after sentence of execution, he met his doom. October 29th, the day of his death, was one of festivity to many of his fellow subjects, for it was that then usually appropriated to the Lord Mayor's procession. Ralegh, even to the last, behaved with his wonted magnanimity, ate his breakfast as usual, and took tobacco; replying to the observations of those who were with him, that he thought no more of his death than if he had been in preparation to take a journey. A scaffold was erected in the Old Palace Yard, near the Parliament House. This last stage to eternity Sir Walter ascended with composure and even with cheerfulness, saluting the numerous and high-born assemblage, who were present, among whom were many with whom he had been long and intimately acquainted. His dress, on this solemn

occasion, was studied with the same precision and attention to decorum that he had ever observed in his attire. It was grave but costly, and adapted at once to the accommodation of his infirmities, and to the situation in which he was placed on this last occasion of his life. Drooping with sickness, and broken with calamities and ill-requited services, his appearance may probably have suggested to the beholders the reflection, that had the axe of the executioner spared him but for a brief space of time, the visitations of disease, and the course of nature would have relieved King James of his supposed and dreaded enemy. It must, indeed, have been an afflicting, as it was a disgraceful spectacle, to behold age, under its most venerable and pitiable aspect, thus exposed to a fate which, even in its softened form, could not be regarded but as one full of opprobrium and of severity.

After silence had been proclaimed, Sir Walter addressed the bystanders, requesting them, if they perceived in him any weakness of voice, or faltering of manner, to attribute them to the langour of disease, with which he was attacked by intermission, and that this was the wonted hour of its approach. After a short pause he sat down, and turning towards a window, in at which were placed the Earls of Arundel, Northampton, and Doncaster, he continued, "I thank

God that he hath brought me to die in the light, and not in darkness." But fearing that his voice was inaudible, he said he would endeavour to exert it, upon which those nobleman immediately came to the scaffold, and, after exchanging salutations, were enabled effectively to hear Ralegh's last justification. In this he distinctly, and to the impartial listener satisfactorily, justified himself from the principal allegations which had attainted his loyalty as a subject, his honour as a private individual, and his conduct as a naval commander. It has been before observed, that he also exonerated himself from the charge of having followed the Earl of Essex to the scaffold, that he might satiate a base spirit of revenge with the sight of his sufferings. In vindicating his conduct as a subject, he denied with vehemence that he had ever engaged in any plot with the King of France, or had a commission from him, or even seen the hand-writing of that monarch. This had been one of the calumnies which Stucley and Mannourie had devised. He solemnly declared that he had never uttered dishonourable or disloyal expressions touching the King; an accusation which had, he said, been fabricated by a "base Frenchman, a runagate fellow, one that had no dwelling—a kind of chemical fellow, one that he knew to be perfidious." This man, he had, as he confessed,

entrusted with the secret of his projected flight, which Mannourie had instantly revealed.

He acknowledged that he had intended to escape, but justified that natural design by the plea of wishing to save his life. He confessed, what was less excusable, that he had dissembled and feigned sickness, but referred, as a precedent, to the example of David, who had assumed the appearance of an idiot to escape from his enemies.

He declared that he forgave his betrayers, Stucley and Mannourie, but warned all men to beware of their perfidy. He denied, specifically, several particulars which they had adduced, especially in relation to the sum of ten thousand pounds, which Stucley had declared Sir Walter to have offered him as a bribe for his escape. After commenting minutely on his conduct during his voyage, he concluded his exhortation in these words: —

"And now I entreat you all to join with me in prayer to the Great God of Heaven, whom I have previously offended, being a man full of vanity, and have lived a sinful life in all sinful callings,—for I have been a soldier, a captain, a sea captain, and a courtier, which are courses of wretchedness and vice,—that God would forgive me and cast away my sins from me, and that he would receive me into everlasting life. So I

take my leave of all you, making my peace with God."

On proclamation being made that all persons should depart from the scaffold, Sir Walter, after taking off some of his attire, gave his hat, a wrought cap which he wore, and some money to his attendants. On bidding a last farewell to the noblemen and other friends, who stood around him, he entreated the Lord Arundel to petition the King, that no calumnious publications might defame him after his death: an entreaty which was utterly disregarded. The composure of his demeanour may be gathered from the simple and tranquil, yet decorous observations which fell in these solemn moments from his lips. With the magnanimity, without the untimely jocularity of Sir Thomas More, he referred to the awful change which both soul and body were shortly to undergo, by remarking "that he had a long journey to go, and must therefore speedily take his leave." Having taken off his gown and doublet, he desired the executioner to show him the fatal instrument of destruction. The man, hesitating to comply, Sir Walter said, "I pr'ythee let me see it: dost thou think that I am afraid of it?" Having passed his finger on the edge of the axe, he returned it, saying to the sheriff, "this is a sharp medicine, but it is a cure for all diseases." Then, entreating the prayers of the beholders, that

God might strengthen and assist him, he gave the customary forgiveness to the executioner, laying his hand on the shoulder of the man. These preliminaries being arranged, he was asked, as he laid his head on the block, in which direction he would place it; an enquiry which he calmly answered, by observing "that if the heart be right, it were no matter which way the head was laid." The executioner threw his cloak over him as he reclined his body on the block, his face being turned towards the east. In a few seconds Sir Walter gave the signal that he was prepared for the solemn office, by raising his hand. No start of weakness, no trembling movement, indicated either the emotions of mental agitation, or those of nervous sensation. By two strokes his head was severed from his body: it was then displayed to the populace on each side of the scaffold, and put into a red leather bag; and his velvet night-gown being thrown over it, it was carried away in a mourning coach belonging to the desolate Lady Ralegh, by whom it was long preserved in a case, and, after her death, kept with the same reverential care by her son Carew, in whose grave it was buried. His body was interred in the church of St. Margaret, in Westminster, near the altar of the sacred edifice.

After his death, two lines were generally circulated, stated to be his, and said to have been

suggested by the expiring snuff of a candle, the very night before he died.

> Cowards fear to die, but courage stout,
> Rather than live in snuff, will be put out.*

This couplet is also thought to have referred to a suggestion made to Ralegh to solicit Gondemar to sue to James for his pardon. The proposal was offered to him by Lord Clare, one of Ralegh's earliest and latest friends, in association with whom he had served both in court and in camps, and to whom he was attached by reciprocity of sentiments, and similarity of pursuits. Yet Lord Clare could not prevail with Ralegh to risk the chance of a refusal, with the sacrifice of that which he deemed a point of honour. "I am neither so old nor so infirm," said he, "but that I should be content to live; and, therefore, this would I do, were I sure it would do my business; but if it fail, then I shall lose both my life and my honour, and both those I will not part with."†

The lines, entitled by Archbishop Sancroft, "Ralegh's epitaph," were given, according to that learned prelate, by Sir Walter to one of his attendants, the night before his execution; and were said to have been found in his Bible, in the Gate-house at Westminster. This touching

* Folio edition of Ralegh, viii. 729.

† Note in Biog. from Collins's Collections, fol. p. 10.

and almost sublime composition, is thus given in the best collection of Ralegh's works:—

Even such is time, that takes on trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with age and dust;
Who in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days!
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
The Lord shall raise me up, I trust.*

The more elaborate poetical effusion, entitled the Farewell, and formerly asserted to have been the composition of Ralegh's last hours, was, however, in print so early as the year 1608, when it appeared in "Davisons' Rhapsody." It is also to be found in a manuscript collection of Ralegh's Poems, dated 1596. It is written with considerable force and point, and is, undoubtedly, the most vigorous of Ralegh's poems; yet it breathes not that chastened and benevolent spirit which he appears to have imbibed in the close of his later years.

Several occurrences, unimportant in themselves, appear to have renewed the subject of Ralegh's death in the public mind, for a short time after his execution. One anecdote, related by Osborn, shows the jealousy of government, of every tribute, whether serious or frivolous, to his memory; and also illustrates the summary and tyrannical mode then adopted of checking any popular feeling.

* See Oxford edition.

It was the fashion of those times, a custom in which the facetious Mr. Francis Orborn frequently concurred, for the principal nobles, gentry, courtiers, and men in professions and occupations, not "merely mechanic," to meet in St. Paul's Church by eleven, and walk in the middle aisle till twelve. This practice was renewed after dinner, from three to six, and afforded to the great, the gay, the ambitious, and the curious, a place of rendezvous, where the topics of the day were discussed*, and much important business, under the semblance of pastime, oftentimes arranged.

Soon after Ralegh's death, Mr. Edward Weimark, a wealthy merchant, one of the frequenters of this noted promenade, and called, on that account, a Paul's walker, chanced to express a wish that Ralegh's head were on Sir Robert Naunton's shoulders, alluding to the notion of incapacity and frivolity which he attached to Naunton, who was better fitted for a mere courtier, than for the office of Secretary of State. The observation was thought, however, to imply an insult, and the offence was deemed a grave one: Weimark was summoned before the Privy Council, and was obliged to allege in his defence, that he had only meant that two heads were better than one. Some time afterwards, upon a contribution being raised for St. Paul's

* Osborn's Mem. of King James, 449.

Cathedral, Weimark at the Council Chamber subscribed one hundred pounds; but the secretary remarking, that "two hundred were better than one," the citizen became alarmed at the renewal of the old proverb, and doubled his subscription.

But soon the recollection of Ralegh was dissipated by fresh events, or it passed away, according to the fashion of an inconstant world, except in the minds of those whose love to him was not of a transitory nature. Dr. Tonson, who, on the 9th of November, penned a narrative of his last hours, remarks, "this was the newes a week since; but now it is blown over, and he is forgotten." * Soon did his sad fate cease to excite sympathy, or the causes of his death to challenge conjecture.

It is some consolation to find, that Stucley's part in this mournful history, was not so hastily obliterated from the public mind. Both he and Mannourie became the subjects of universal opprobrium. † The firmness of Ralegh in his asseverations, having shaken all credence in Stucley's calumnies, that individual offered, at court, to take the sacrament that what he had said of Ralegh was true, and to produce two other witnesses that would do the same. Never-

* Tonson's Letter, Oxford ed. viii. 782.

† Letter in Cayley's App. ii. 417.

theless his company was obviously avoided; and, on a subsequent occasion, his character was fully disclosed in a fraudulent transaction. For avarice, his besetting sin, having tempted him to to lay his hands upon some coin in the very palace of Whitehall, he was condemned to be hanged, and was constrained to purchase his pardon by the sacrifice of all his possessions, even, as it is said, to his shirt. He afterwards returned to the little island of Lundy, in the Severn, and died, in less than two years after Ralegh, insane, and a beggar.*

Respecting Ralegh's surviving family, a far more charitable species of interest is felt, than that which the miserable fate of Stucley inspires. His widow survived him nine and twenty years, but never replaced one who had few equals, by a second marriage. After his death she is said to have relaxed not in her exertions to rescue his property from the grasp of others, and to have petitioned government to restore his Irish estates to his family, on the ground that the sale was illegal, and the whole transaction irregular.

Carew Ralegh, the only surviving offspring of Sir Walter and Lady Ralegh, was, at the time of his father's death, thirteen years of age. He was educated at Wadham College, Oxford, and introduced at Court, by William Earl of Pem-

* Oldys, 221.

broke, his kinsman, and the son of that noble lady who was the subject of Ben Jonson's commendations, and who had formerly interceded for Sir Walter Ralegh. But, although thus protected, the misfortunes of his family were, in many respects, extended to Carew Ralegh. On his appearance at Court, the King observing "that he looked like the ghost of his father," the poor youth was constrained to absent himself, and to travel for a year, when the death of James occurring, he returned. Parliament being then sitting, he petitioned to be restored to his rights, but was not allowed the privilege of inheriting his father's property, until he had been induced, by threats and persuasions, to give up all claim upon the Sherborne estate, which had been consigned to Digby, Earl of Bristol. Nor was that portion of his father's lands ever restored to him, although upon the subsequent flight of Digby to France, a fair opportunity of rendering him justice was presented. He was permitted, however, to retain a pension of 400*l.* a year, which had been allowed to Lady Ralegh during her life, and he was afterwards constituted by General Monk, governor of Jersey. Carew Ralegh sought to vindicate his father's fame both in his letters to Mr. James Howell; and in his work, entitled a "Brief Relation of Sir Walter Ralegh's Troubles." He is also supposed to

have been the author of "Observations on Sanderson's History of Mary Queen of Scots, and her son James." He inherited some portion of his father's abilities, and poetical turn; but not his enthusiasm and elevation of character. Perhaps the depressing circumstances of his birth and education, may account for the cautious, and as some writers state, interested nature of his disposition. By a fortunate marriage he became possessed of wealth; and, in the person of his son, the title of Sir Walter Ralegh was revived, at the restoration of Charles II. It is a pleasing trait in the conduct of Carew Ralegh, that he chose to be buried in his father's grave, at Westminster, in preference to being interred at either of the country seats of which he had become possessed, both at West Horsley, in Surrey, and at Kenton Park, near Hampton Court.*

The works which Ralegh left behind him, in prose alone are considerable; and as not many writers have exceeded him in the number of his compositions, very few can also be found who have equalled him in the variety of his subjects.

His poetical compositions in order of time, are first enumerated by those who have sedulously collected them from various publications

* In the same tomb with the father and son, or very near to it, were interred the remains of James Harrington, the author of Oceana. Aubrey MSS. Oxf. ed. R. W. viii. 744.

or from the Ashmolean Library at Oxford, in which several manuscript pieces attributed to him have been discovered. Unlike the poets of more modern times, Ralegh appears to have carelessly scattered the effusions of his fancy in sundry contemporary publications, to have neglected their preservation, and to have disregarded the possibility of their being attributed to others. It is remarkable that a stanza in his "Silent Lover," one of his most eulogized poems, was, about seventy years ago, current among the fashionable literary circles, as the production of the celebrated Earl of Chesterfield.*

It is evident that Ralegh had recourse to poetry as a recreation only, and that he never, even in his youth, considered it as the probable basis of his fame. Hence, the desultory mode in which his lyric efforts were flung, as it were, from his pen; most of them originating in the passing circumstances of the day, and written in the enthusiasm of the moment. We are therefore to regard his poems as the indications, rather than the fruits of his genius. The mind which unfolds

* Oxf. ed. Ral. Works, viii. 775, note. The stanza runs thus: —

Silence in love bewrays more woe
Than words, though ne'er so witty,
A beggar that is dumb, you know,
Deserveth double pity.

itself in his finished works, is also displayed, forcible, elegant, and imaginative, in the dreams of his muse; but it is obvious that he bestowed not, in preparing these latter exhibitions of talent, the same care as in more important undertakings. Of his poetry, a considerable portion is devotional; some pieces are dedicated to flattery of Queen Elizabeth, under a strain of affected humility and of passionate admiration. A few pastoral, and two satirical compositions vary the collection; but the finest verses are those already referred to in some publications entitled the "Farewell," and in others the "Lie," and beginning with the spirited and well-known stanza,

> Go soul, the body's guest,
> Upon a thankless errand,
> Fear not to touch the best,
> The truth shall be thy warrant.

As a poet, Sir Walter Ralegh might, perhaps, in the lapse of time have been forgotten, except by the antiquary; but there is scarcely another subject which he has handled, his treatises upon which would not have insured him an exalted rank in the literature of his country. Possessed not only of extensive knowledge, but of indefatigable industry, he displayed a perfect acquaintance both with military and maritime science, and proved in his numerous publications on these subjects, not only that his theories were well-digested and ingenious, but that his inform-

ation was practical, and his facts gleaned from experience. Upon military operations he wrote three discourses, two of which were completed during the three eventful and busy years of his life, before the invasion of the Spanish Armada. Upon maritimal concerns he published no fewer than eight treatises *, being, as he proudly announced, the first writer either ancient or modern that had treated on this subject. † These works are written with great perspicuity, and, although, the practices recommended in them be now obsolete, and the improvements and plans suggested, superseded by the rapid strides of modern science, they are interesting, as all compositions dictated by good-sense and experience must ever be; and curious, as illustrating the comparative progress of navigation, and of the arts connected with it. Several of the essays were dedicated, or addressed in the form of letters, to Prince Henry.

The geographical discoveries of Ralegh would have held a much higher station in the collectanea of valuable dissertations which he left to posterity, had not their credit been lessened by speculations in which the interests of his immediate gains were obviously considered, and those

* See Notes in Biog. art. Ralegh, with a complete list of his works.

† Hist. Wood. lib. 5. cap. 1. sect. 6.

of truth disregarded. He appears to have relied too readily upon the accounts of others, and to have allowed himself, according to the fashion of the day, when no precision in geographical delineations was deemed essential, too much latitude in conjecture; an error which eventually, as we have seen, proved fatal to his reputation. Those of his works, which may be classed under the head of Physical Geography, consisted of several discourses upon the discovery, planting, and settlement of Virginia; a treatise on the West Indies: and his accounts of Guiana, which have already been noticed.

It has been well remarked, that Ralegh was no less qualified to govern nations, than to conquer or defend them, an observation which was drawn forth by the number of political works which he composed. Of these, one treatise entitled "The Cabinet Council, containing the chief Arts of Empire, and Mysteries of State, discabineted;" was published by Milton in 1658; with the motto "Quis Martem tunica tectum adamantina digne scripserit?" And with the following notice. "Having had the manuscript of this treatise, written by Sir Walter Ralegh, many years in my hands, and finding it lately by chance, among other books and papers, upon reading thereof I thought it a kind of injury to withhold longer the work of so eminent an author from the public; it being both answerable in style to other works of his

already extant, as far as the subject will permit, and given me for a true copy by a learned man at his death, who had collected several such pieces.*

"JOHN MILTON."

Whilst this essay treats on the nature of governments generally, that on the Prerogative of Parliament, dedicated to King James, and printed at Middleburgh in 1628, descants in the form of dialogue, and in an ingenious and animated manner, on the peculiarities, history, and advantages of the English constitution and usages, with which Ralegh had no ordinary nor superficial acquaintance. His treatises on political subjects amount in number to ten; the authenticity of one or two of these is, however, doubtful; several are still in manuscript in the Ashmolean Library at Oxford; but few of these were published during his life-time, and, consequently, had neither the benefit of his corrections, nor of his inspection.

The philosophical writings of Ralegh are remarkable for the peculiarly happy and elegant mode in which his positions are illustrated, and for the fascination which he throws around his subject. Whilst to the profound metaphysician they may appear deficient in depth, or imperfect in conception and arrangement, they are, perhaps, to a general reader, the most engaging of

* See Oxford edit. of Ralegh's Works, vol. viii. p. 36.

all his works. In the "Sceptic," he has ingeniously shewn the various and contradictory views, which may, with an appearance of justice, be entertained of the same subjects. Upon this fanciful plan he has displayed extensive observations of nature, and a knowledge of her economy, which excite wonder and admiration, when his multifarious occupations, in the court, the camp, and the cabinet, are considered. Ralegh, during the short periods of leisure which he enjoyed, must have been an indefatigable student, and that which in private he stored up with so much assiduity, he knew well how to apply with address, when called forth by occasion.

Among his philosophical works have been classed, "The Instructions to his Son, and Posterity," published after his death, in the small collection of his works, entitled his "Remains." This didactic composition reminds the modern reader, in many passages, of the celebrated Letters of Lord Chesterfield, who may, perhaps, have borrowed the notion of such a form of admonition from this little work. But Ralegh, in directing the attention of youth to the formation of character, presents, as the only solid foundation, the pure principles of Christianity, and derives his best maxims from Holy Writ itself. He places, indeed, a sufficient, and perhaps, more than sufficient importance upon worldly motives and worldly prudence; but

he considers them ever as in subjection to virtue and religion. In this respect he holds a rank as an instructor, far superior to the ingenious writer with whom the foregoing comparison has been made. Although he enters not into the minutiæ of deportment, habits, and dress, nor upon the methods necessary for the attainment of a good name in society, upon which Lord Chesterfield peculiarly insisted, yet he may be deemed, of the two, the wiser friend, and, it may be added, the more affectionate father; for he writes with a more earnest regard to those interests of his child, and of youth in general, to which an anxious parent would look with solicitude, and inculcate with the greatest assiduity. The essays of Ralegh are calculated to form the pure and well-intentioned youth, into an upright and religious member of the community. Those of his modern rival are qualified to nourish selfishness, to encourage the subtleties and artifices of polite life, and to convert the aspirations of youthful ambition into an habitual reverence for worldly advantages, and for these alone.

With these instructions of Ralegh to his son, has been published another essay, entitled, "The dutiful Advice of a loving Son to his Father," by some considered as a satire upon Ralegh, but by most of his biographers considered to be the production of his son.

Such was the variety of Ralegh's avocations, that, besides these works on Moral Philosophy, he left two others on Natural Philosophy, for one of which, "A Treatise on Mines, and the Trial of Minerals," he found time to collect materials during his transient visits into Cornwall and Devonshire, and improved, and extended the ideas thus acquired, by his acquaintance with the West Indies, and his intimacy with Sir Adrian Gilbert. That kinsman of Ralegh, began, in the reign of Elizabeth, to explore the long-neglected mines of Comb Martin, from the stores of which Edward the Third supplied the resources for his wars with France; and from the silver ore of which, Sir Adrian caused two massy goblets to be formed, one of which he presented to the Earl of Bath, and the other to the Lord Mayor of London, in the thirty-fifth year of the Queen's reign.*

Ralegh also left a collection of "Chymical and medicinal receipts for fixing mercury, preparing antimony, and for the cure of various diseases." This work is still in manuscript, in the library of Sir Hans Sloane: it is contained in about seventy leaves in quarto; and on one leaf Sir Walter has written, "our great cordial," with a line under it, and a list of ingredients following.†

* Oldys, 183. † Note in Oldys, 183.

Of Ralegh's historical productions, some incidental notices have already been given in the course of this sketch of his life. The noblest of all his literary productions, the History of the World, was not, in all probability, commenced until he had entered his fifty-first year; and when, in sickness and despondency, he had to check the afflicting retrospection of his heaviest calamities, to sustain unrelenting persecutions, and the most appalling reverses of fortune, and to contend against the depression naturally produced by the prospect of a long imprisonment. Such were the circumstances with which he had to conflict, and such their tendency to damp his ardour for fame, and to chill every transport of enthusiasm. These were, however, ineffectual in impeding the progress of such a portion of this undertaking as is sufficient to perpetuate Ralegh's name, so long as our national literature shall continue to exist. It is deeply to be regretted, that if he had actually collected materials for a second part, they were destroyed, or suffered to remain useless. If, as an historian of remote ages, he could throw any interest into the narrative of early times, how vivid would have been his pictures of modern manners; how animated his details of the achievements of chivalry; how graphic, and yet how impartial, his relations of the vast changes, which time, conquest, or religion, effect upon our moral condition! It is

however, problematical, whether more than loose notes, or hasty reflections were really compiled for the sequel of this justly eulogized undertaking.

On Ralegh's epistolary remains, too high an encomium can scarcely be passed. Of these Mr. Oldys had seen twenty-eight letters, either in manuscript or in print, which, with the addition of those printed in the Appendix to this work, and collected from the State Paper Office, amount to a considerable number, and would form a small volume. Some of his epistles, especially to Sir Ralph Winwood, may be ranked, from the important events they describe, and their official character, among his historical productions. In this form of composition, Ralegh is always admirable; and, whether we view him as a grave narrator of facts, or in the familiarity of friendly communication, he has been equalled by few of our English writers; for few have possessed the art to appear wholly concerned in their subjects, and but little in themselves. It has been remarked, respecting a letter of Ralegh's, published by Sir Richard Steele in the Englishman, that there is no satisfactory evidence of its authenticity.* This, of his epistles, is most generally admired, and known; yet, although a beautiful composition, it might seem rather to be the production of Steele himself, than

* Cayley.

to Ralegh, with whose sentiments of monarchy*, as well as with his usual style of composition, it is at variance in many respects.

Sir Walter Ralegh was sixty years old at the time of his death; but, although then suffering from fever, retained considerable vigour of constitution, even to the last. The attributes of his person were universally acknowledged by his contemporaries, to be strength, symmetry, and dignity; of his countenance, proportion and expression, not, indeed, wholly devoid of a peculiarity, at first sight, unpleasing; his forehead was exceedingly high, and the contour of his face altogether long; and the general impression which his presence inspired, was that of a commanding boldness, not unmingled with austerity.† There was an ancient rebus, usually applied in Sir Walter's time, to his name as it was then pronounced:—

"The enemy to the stomach ‡, and the word of disgrace §,
Is the name of the gentleman with a bold face.

Tradition asserts him to have had a weak voice, a report which seems probable, from the apprehension which he manifested on several important public occasions, lest he should not be distinctly heard. Notwithstanding his learned education, his intercourse with foreign nations,

* See his Cabinet Council. Oxford ed. vol. viii. p. 37, 38.
† Aubrey's MSS. Oxford ed. vol. viii. p. 738.
‡ Raw. § Ly.

and with polite and intellectual society at home, Sir Walter Ralegh is said to have spoken "broad Devonshire to his dying day." *

In his ordinary habits of life, he possessed that faculty, conspicuous in men of powerful genius, of being able quickly to vary his pursuits, and of giving the whole powers of his mind to that which ought immediately to occupy his attention. The various faculties of his understanding were thus incessantly called into exercise, and no portion of his acquirements was suffered to fall into disuse. In the early part of his life, it seems incomprehensible how he could have studied; and, when he found leisure, or retirement, to accumulate the great stores of learning, which afterwards caused him to be reputed "one of the weightiest and wisest men that this island ever bred." † Independent of his military career, of a life of incessant activity in Ireland, in France, in Portugal, and at home, he was the gayest member of society, and the most loquacious, frolicsome, and frequent attendant upon taverns, and other places of resort, then in vogue. He was not, however, indiscriminate in his approval of certain companions. Aubrey relates, that being much annoyed by the impertinence and incessant vociferation of one Charles Chester, the original of

* Aubrey. † Howell's Letters, vol. ii. p. 372.

Ben Jonson's Carlo Buffone*, Sir Walter sealed up the mouth, upper and nether beard of this noisy personage, with hard wax, accompanying the outrage with an effectual beating. Of Ralegh's social habits but few authentic anecdotes have been transmitted to us. Inferences, from casual remarks and various authors, may, however, be drawn, that he was frequently, during his liberty, in public and in private festivities, into which he introduced, both by the importation of tobacco, and his own practice, the custom of smoking, with a silver pipe, which was at first handed round from one man to another at table.†. But he knew how to indulge in recreation without constituting it the sole end and aim of his being, an error, fatal to enjoyment, as well as to mental attainments. Few men were so independent of external circumstances: within the walls of a prison; or, what is almost equally a durance, the narrow bounds of a ship's cabin, he could make to himself an imaginary world by the aid of study and reflection. We have seen how he employed the period of his captivity: he is said also to have studied assiduously in his sea voyages, where he carried always along with him a great trunk of books.‡

On the qualities of Sir Walter Ralegh's mind,

* See "Every Man out of his Humour."
† Aubrey. ‡ Ibid.

most writers have been agreed. That he possessed imagination, not rendered sickly by continued indulgence, but invigorated by the aid of judgment and cultivation, is undeniable. That the scope which he proposed to himself in his literary undertakings was most extensive, and that it could only be compassed by a mind of the most elevated and powerful character, is equally obvious. He planned more than many men have ventured even to think on; he executed what few individuals have been bold enough to plan. Although an experimentalist, he was not merely a dreamer; his energies were in proportion to his schemes. Yet in delineating the mental characteristics of this extraordinary man, we cannot but acknowledge the preponderance of his imagination over the other attributes of his intellect; a preponderance increased by a temperament naturally ardent and sanguine. Subdued, as it was, by the necessities of action, and by an incessant mingling with the realities of life, it was this quality, which whilst it gave the charm, produced also the danger to Ralegh's career. In a moral sense, whilst it was the source of most of his glorious enterprizes, it was also the cause of his speculations, of his acts of imprudence, and schemes of ambition. The errors of his life may far more justly be traced to the visionary notions which he indulged, and which were not,

indeed, always of a selfish character, than to gross deficiencies in principle, or defects of the heart. His faults, exaggerated as they were by the writers of his own times, belonged to the period in which he lived: his virtues attained a degree of eminence which a far more civilised age would have viewed with admiration and repaid with gratitude. Where, in any of the successive reigns, up to the present day, do we behold such instances of patriotic exertion in a private individual, as in Ralegh, who never attained any offices in the state, but such as were calculated to give him local importance only? Though accused, and in some points convicted of avarice, where the national glory was concerned he risked, in his earliest expeditions, large portions of his property; and, in his last fatal voyage, ventured all that he possessed. Though ambitious, and a courtier, he was not time-serving, like Cecil, nor despicably subservient, like Bacon: and, at the accession of James I., was almost the only man that dared to give that monarch honest counsel. Though desirous, after his disgrace, of restitution to honour and station, he was yet above seeking it by any base crimination of others, or mean concession to his oppressors: he neither vilified Cobham, nor condescended to beg from Gondemar the boon of existence.

As a statesman Ralegh was earnest, liberal, enlightened, and, generally, independent. As a British subject, he was assiduous in his country's service; in most of his designs benevolent, and, except for persecution, he would have been loyal. As an author, he has sought to promote the interests of morality, and to elevate its standard: neither infidelity nor impurity sullied the worth of his productions. He bequeathed not to posterity that which the most sedulous parent might not place in the hands of a child, just rising to a consciousness of the existence of evil. He did more; he left those testimonies of his wisdom, and efforts of his abilities, which would inspire in the youthful breast sentiments of generous ambition, and a desire of laudable exertion. To the senator, the soldier, the mariner, the student, he may alike be presented as a model for imitation, and a stimulus to hopes of success. Nor, when we look into the private life of Ralegh, are we compelled to check the enjoyment which admiration of talent produces: strongly tinctured with the erroneous notions of the day, in some points, he was yet a good man. Though, in his youth, he ran into irregularities, these were not settled into vices: his heart was affectionate, and his horror of profligacy, on many occasions, strongly and admirably expressed.* Though tempted, in the

* See his Letter to his Son, &c.

ardour of military fame, to acts of cruelty, he became patient, lenient, and compassionate: this is evident from the love which his shipmates bore to him, and from the care and anxiety which he evinced for them in all his voyages. Though vehement in his enmities, in early life, his latter days were not degraded, as far as we can judge, by virulent resentments or malevolent feelings, for which few men could have been more excused. His expressions, whenever he alludes to his wrongs, are temperate; and on all solemn occasions, on his trial, at his execution, though he earnestly sought to justify himself, he abstained from reflections upon others.

On one of the most important points of his character, his veracity, opinions are still divided. Whether Ralegh really believed, or only feigned to believe in the riches of Guiana; whether his account of that country were the result of credulity, or the labour of imposture, can scarcely be determined. But on these considerations, different views will be adopted, in proportion to the different notions imbibed of his general qualities. Confiding in a man, as honourable and faithful, we should be inclined rather to charge him with folly, than to censure him for deception. In the reign of James, the prevalent, or at least avowed sentiment regarding

Ralegh, was that of distrust and reprobation. Hence the worst construction was placed upon his failure and his errors: but posterity, rendering him justice in the other passages of his life, will be more inclined to view him in this respect with indulgence.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

NOTE (A).

THE potatoe is the tuber of a poisonous plant, the *Solanum tuberosum*, a native of South America; belonging to the natural order *Solaneæ*. It is improperly regarded as a root, as it is a tuber or an underground magazine of nutriment for the gems, the rudiments of the lateral progeny of the plant which is to become plants in the subsequent year. The potatoe is not even attached to the root; but, by cords of vessels, or wires, as they are termed, to the base of the stem or caudex. The nutriment formed in the plant by the exposure of the sap to the air and light in the leaf, is conveyed through these wires, and deposited in the tubes for the use of the gems. It is not, however, until these begin to vegetate, that the farinaceous matter is absorbed; and at this time, it undergoes a change, and acquires saccharine properties. As the young plant grows, the potatoe shrivels; and, being at length exhausted, becomes an empty skin; but ere this happens, the young plants are capable of supplying themselves from the ground, and no longer acquire the aid of the tuber. In converting the potatoe, therefore, to nourishment for himself, man robs the young plants of what nature intends for their support: by the art of cultivation, however, he has greatly in

creased the supply of nutriment, the wild potatoe affording tubers not longer than a walnut.

The uncooked potatoe possesses injurious if not poisonous properties; but heat destroys these, and converts the parenchyma of the tuber into a highly nutritive and agreeable food. It is a matter of dispute with political economists, whether the introduction of the potatoe has really contributed to the welfare of the human race.

A. T. T.

Note B.

Notices relative to Tobacco, by Doctor A. T. Thomson.

"He first the snuff-box open'd, then the case."

Rape of the Lock.

What is tobacco, which has enslaved to its use the greater part of the human race for upwards of three centuries? is a question which naturally occurs to the mind of any one who hears or reads of the obstacles which were opposed to its introduction into Europe, and the popularity which it has for so long a period of time maintained. The reply is familiar to every one: it is the dried leaf of a species of plant which is named, in botanical language, *Nicotiana tabacum;* but it is not generally known that the Tobacco, which is brought to this country in the form of dried leaves, cigars, and snuff, is the production of not one only, but of several species of the genus Nicotiana. The greater number of the species are annual plants, natives of South America; but two, at least, are perennial; the Nicotiana *fruticosa*, which is a shrub, a native of the Cape of Good Hope, and of China; and N. *urens*, a native of South America. Many of the species are cultivated in Europe; but, it is re-

markable that Humboldt found two only of them; the N. *paniculata*, and N. *glutinosa*, growing wild in the Oroonoko. He added two new species to the family, the N. *laxensis* and *andicola*, which he found on the Andes at 1850 toises of elevation.*

The species of Nicotiana which was first known, and which still furnishes the greatest supply of Tobacco, is the N. *tabacum*, an annual plant, a native of South America, but naturalised to our climate. It is a tall, not inelegant plant, rising to the height of six feet, with a strong, round, villous, slightly viscid stem, furnished with alternate leaves, which are sessile, or clasp the stem; and are decurrent, lanceolate, entire; of a full green on the upper surface, and pale on the under. In a vigorous plant, the lower leaves are about twenty inches in length, and from three to five in breadth, decreasing as they ascend. The inflorescence, or flowering part of the stem, is terminal, loosely branching in that form which botanists term a panicle, with long, linear floral leaves or bractes at the origin of each division. The flowers, which blow in July and August, are of a pale pink or rose colour: the *calyx* or flower-cup, is bell-shaped, obscurely pentangular, villous, slightly viscid, and presenting at the margin five acute, erect segments. The *corolla* is twice the length of the calyx, viscid, tubular below, swelling above into an oblong cup, and expanding at the lip into fine, somewhat plaited, pointed segments; the seed vessel is an oblong or ovate capsule, containing numerous reniform seeds, which are ripe in September and October; and, if not collected, are shed by the capsule opening at the apex.

The character that particularly distinguishes N. *tabacum* from the other species of the genus, is the sessile, recurrent leaves.

* Humboldt's Personal Narrative, vol. v.

Besides the species of Nicotiana described by botanists, seven kinds of Tobacco, some of which are probably distinct species, others only varieties of the *tabacum*, are cultivated in Virginia; and known by the names Hudson, Frederick, thick-joint, shoe-string, thickset, sweet-scented, and Oroonoko. * The cultivation of Tobacco varies in different places. I shall only mention that which is pursued, and the manner of preparing the plant, in the United States. The seed is sown in February and March, when the ground is soft and rendered light by repeated workings; in April, after the first vernal rains, the young plants are drawn, and planted in beds, at the distance of three feet from one another. The plantations must be kept well weeded; and in another month the top of each plant is pruned off, the lateral shoots or suckers are taken away, and the weeds very carefully kept down. At this period the plants are attacked by several insects, from which they are cleared by turkies, flocks of which are driven into the grounds for this purpose. † When the plant has attained its full height, the leaves begin to acquire a brownish colour,

* Brodigan on the Tobacco Plant, p. 17.

† In Columbia the following are the great enemies of the Tobacco plant. A grub, named *canne*, which devours the young buds; the *rosca-worm*, which commits its depredations in the night only, burying in the ground during the day; the grub of a butterfly, called by the Creoles *palometa*; a species scarabeus called *arader*, which feeds on the root of the plant; and a species of caterpillar which is called in the country the *horned-worm*, so voracious as to require one night only to devour an entire leaf of tobacco. The natural history of these insects has not yet been examined.

In South America, the Tobacco is fermented in balls made in a peculiar manner; and in order to obtain from the plant a juice which is highly prized under the name of *Moo* and *Chimoo*; the fermentation is repeated four successive times; a weight is then placed on the balls which presses out this liquor, and which, received into appropriate vessels, is boiled to the consistence of a syrup. It is much prized by the planters of the interior of Tierra Firme. *Vide* Colombia, vol. ii. p. 117.

and a clamminess which indicates their maturity. They are now cut close to the surface of the ground, and laid in heaps, exposed to the sun, for one day; then carried to the sheds, where each plant is hung up separately, and remains until the leaves are perfectly dry; after which they are stripped from the stalks, and tied in small bundles, a twisted leaf serving to tie them together. These bundles are now laid in heaps, and sometimes covered with blankets or straw, to favour a fermentation which takes place in them; but, to prevent their being overheated, they are occasionally opened and spread abroad to the air.* As soon as all danger of overheating is past, the Tobacco is packed in casks and carried to the public warehouse, where it is examined; if pronounced good, a transfer note is given to the owner, and it is permitted to be exported; if it be bad and unsaleable, it is publicly burnt, and the certificate refused.

Tobacco, as it arrives in this country, has undergone a second fermentation, or *sea sweat*, as it is termed; and acquires a dark brown hue, and a soft texture. Its odour is strong, and to many not very agreeable; it tastes bitter and very acrid, and, when burned, emits sparks, continuing to burn after it has been lighted, resembling the deflagrating of paper that has been soaked in nitre, to which salt, indeed, tobacco owes this mode of burning. It yields its properties both to water and to alcohol; and when distilled *per se*, affords a green essential oil, which is a virulent poison. The expressed juice of the fresh leaves has been analysed by Vauquelin, the celebrated French chemist, who found in it a considerable quantity of vegetable *albumen* or *gluten*; some *super-malate of lime*, *acetic acid*, *nitrate* and *muriate of potassa*; a *red*

* Warden's Account of the United States, quoted by Brodigan, p. 123-26.

matter, soluble in alcohol and in water, the nature of which is still unknown; *muriate of ammonia*, and a peculiar acrid, volatile principle, which Vauquelin termed *nicotina*, from the generic name of the plant. To this substance and the volatile oil, the properties of Tobacco, both in an economical and medicinal point of view, are to be attributed. I shall notice the peculiar properties of each of these principles in its proper place.

Ralegh found Tobacco cultivated in Trinidad, on his first visit to it in 1593; but it was not introduced into Virginia until 1616, when its growth there was commenced under the government of Sir Thomas Dale. It is now raised also in the Brazils, Demerary, Cuba, St. Domingo, the Cape of Good Hope, and in India. Sir W. Ralegh introduced its culture into Ireland, on his estate at Youghal, in the county of Cork; and it is still produced to a small extent in Carlow, Waterford, and Kilkenny, although it has ceased to be raised in England and Scotland, since 1782. Before that period, it was extensively reared in the north riding of Yorkshire; and in the neighbourhood of Kelso, in Scotland, not less than one thousand acres were covered with it. How far the prohibition of its growth at home is to be regarded as an act of legislative wisdom, I must leave others to determine.

The history of Tobacco, as a luxury, is a striking illustration of the inefficacy of human laws to control the inclinations of mankind. When Columbus discovered the continent of the Western world, he found that, in some of the religious ceremonies of the Indians, a plant was thrown into the fire, the smoke of which, ascending, produced the same effects upon the officiating Piache*,

* The Piaches are both priests and physicians, and are also versed in magic. They perform all religious ceremonies; have the right of healing,

as the mephitic vapours of Delphos upon the Pythian priestess: responses were given, and oracles delivered, under the influence of a peculiar intoxication. This plant was Tobacco; which was probably used, also, as a luxury by the subjects of Montezuma, as it was smoked over the whole of America at the period of the Spanish conquest.* Its introduction into the Old World soon followed; and although it was opposed by every power, both civil and religious, yet its use has become so general, that it is not only regarded as the solace and enjoyment of the luxurious in every rank of life in civilised Europe, but has been introduced wherever Europeans have found their way; even into the islands of the Pacific Ocean by their adventurous discoverers. In the Sandwich Islands, says Kotzebue, Tobacco is now so generally used, that young children learn to smoke before they walk, and grown up people carry the practice to such an excess, that they have fallen down senseless, and often died in consequence.†

There is reason for believing, that the first time the Spaniards saw Tobacco smoked, as a luxury, was at an amicable interview between Grijalva, a Spaniard, and the Cazique of Tabasco, after a victory which Grijalva, who, under the auspices of Velasquez, conducted an expedition from St. Iago de Cuba, 1518, had gained

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conjuring evil spirits, and predicting futurity. — (See a work entitled *Colombia*, vol. i. p. 647.) Monardes relates, that among the South American Indians, when the priests are consulted by the caciques, they throw Tobacco upon the fire, receive the smoke in their mouths, and, being thus intoxicated, fall down, and, on recovering, deliver the responses which they pretend to have received from the world of spirits.

* Humboldt's Personal Narrative, vol. v. p. 666.

† Voyage of Discovery.

over the Indians, at Potonchan. It was from the name of the place of this interview, which is indiscriminately called Tabasco and Tabaco *, that the plant received the appellation, which Hernandez de Toledo then imposed upon it, and which it still retains. † In the following year, 1519, Cortez, who had commenced his career of ambition, transmitted a propitiatory present to Charles, as a specimen of the wealth and productions of the territory he had conquered for him: as a part of this tribute, Tobacco first found its way into Europe, and, through the Venetian and Genpese traders to the Levant, it was introduced into Turkey, Arabia, Persia, and the whole of Asia. It was not, however, until the middle of this century that it attracted considerable notice. In 1561 some seeds of Tobacco were given by a Dutch planter to Jean Nicot, Lord of Villemain, and Master of Requests in the French court, who was then the ambassador of Francis II. in Portugal. Nicot sent them to Catherine de Medicis, who afterwards patronised it as a medicine; and thence it obtained the name of Herbe à la Reine until her death. The generic name, *Nicotiana*, was imposed by Linnæus; and is the appellation now employed.

About this period, the monarchs of the world combined, as it were, to crush, by force, the evils which they anticipated from the introduction of Tobacco into their dominions. In England, Elizabeth published an

* Tabasco is an island in the Gulf of Mexico, at the bottom of the Bay of Campachy. It is formed by the river Tabasco, which, rising in the mountains of Chiapa, continues its course until within four leagues of the sea, when it divides and separates the island of Tabasco from the continent.

† Notwithstanding this clear illustration of the origin of the specific name, some are of opinion that it is derived from *Tabac*, said to be the name of the instrument used in America for smoking the herb.

edict against its use, assigning as a reason, that her subjects, by employing the same luxuries as barbarians, were likely to degenerate into barbarism*: and in the following reign, James wrote his celebrated "Counterblaste to Tobacco," in which he remarks that the custom of smoking "is loathsome to the eye, hatefull to the nose, harmefull to the braine, dangerous to the lungs; and in the black stinking fume thereof, nearest resembling the horrible Stygian smoake of the pit that is bottomless†;' whilst, at the same time, he imposed a prohibitory duty of six shillings and eight pence per pound on its importation‡, and enacted, that no planter in Virginia should raise more than one hundred pounds of it in one year.* Charles continued this impost, and made Tobacco a royal monopoly, as it is at the present period, in the Netherlands and in France. An amusing fact, connected with the opposition to its general use, is related of Fagon, the physician to Lewis XIV.: in the midst of an oration on the pernicious effects of Tobacco, the orator made a pause; and, taking his snuff-box from his pocket, refreshed himself with a pinch to enable him to renew the argument.

* Camden thus states this fact. — "Anglorum corpora in barbarorum naturam degenerasse, quum iidem ac barbari delectentur." — *Annal. Eliz.* p. 143. The general opposition on the part of different governments to its introduction, may be, in some measure, explained by the fact, that the poisonous qualities of Tobacco were known in Europe at the time of its introduction from America.

† James also proposed as a banquet for the devil, "a pig, a poole of ling and mustard, and a pipe of Tobacco for digestive." (*a*) Nevertheless, in the treaty for Guiana, Robert Harcourt stipulated, on the part of James, "that one tenth of the Tobacco cultivated there should go to the king," *Harris*, vol. i. p. 7.

‡ The duty in the reign of Elizabeth was only two pence per pound.

(*a*) Apophthegms of King James, 1671.

In 1590, Shah Abbas prohibited the use of Tobacco in Persia, by a penal law: but, so firmly had the luxury rooted itself in the minds of his subjects, that many of the inhabitants of the cities fled to the mountains, where they hid themselves, rather than forego the pleasure of smoking. In the beginning of the next century, in 1624, Pope Urban VIII. anathematised all snuff-takers, who committed the heinous sin of taking a pinch in any church: and so late as 1690, Innocent XII. excommunicated all who indulged in the same vice in Saint Peter's church, at Rome. In 1625, Amurath IV. prohibited smoking, as an unnatural and irreligious custom, under pain of death: few, indeed, suffered the penalty, yet, in Constantinople, where the custom is now universal, smoking was thought to be so ridiculous and hurtful, that any Turk, who was caught in the act, was conducted in ridicule through the streets, with a pipe transfixed through his nose. In Russia, where the peasantry now smoke all day long, the Grand Duke of Moscow prohibited the entrance of Tobacco into his dominions, under the penalty of the knaut for the first offence, and death for the second; and the Muscovite who was found snuffing, was condemned to have his nostrils split. So great, indeed, was the animosity of the government against Tobacco, in every form, that a particular tribunal, the Chambre au Tabac, for punishing smokers, was instituted in 1634, and not abolished until the middle of the eighteenth century. Even in Switzerland, war was waged against the American herb: to smoke, in Berne, ranked as a crime next to adultery; and in 1653, all smokers were cited before the Council at Apenzel, and severely punished. But, like many bad, and all persecuted customs, Tobacco triumphed over its opponents; it is now cultivated in both hemispheres of the globe; and the importation of Tobacco and snuff

into Great Britain alone, in 1829, amounted to 16,880 hogsheads.*

It has been stated that tobacco was discovered by the Spaniards in Yucatan, in 1518; but Humboldt asserts, that it was cultivated, from time immemorial, by the natives of the Oroonoko; where it is called *Petun*, *Pote-ma*, and *Piciel*.† It was, soon after its discovery,

Comparative Statement of the Importation, Home Consumption, Exportation, Stock remaining, and Prices of American Tobacco at London for Six Years, ending 31st of December, 1829.

Years.	Importation.	Exportation.	Home Consumption.	Stock.	Prices, 31st December, per lb.	1829.	1829.
	Hhds.	Hhds.	Hhds.	Hhds.	d. s. d.	The Importation consisted of	Deliveries to
1824	8737	5924	3704	14719	Virginia, 2¼ to 0 8 Maryland, 2 to 2 0	Hhds.	Hhds.
1825	18745	2032	3820	27878	Virginia, 3¾ to 0 9½ Maryland, 2¾ to 2 3	Virginia, ...6575	Holland, ...2072
1826	10340	6137	3901	27705	Virginia, 3 to 0 8 Maryland, 3 to 2 0	Kentucky,&c. 2106	Hans Towns,.. 518
1827	10223	8041	4279	25575	Virginia, 2½ to 0 6½ Maryland, 3½ to 1 6	Maryland,..... 939	Prussia, ... 12
1828	9516	8035	4031	23024	Virginia, 2¼ to 0 6½ Maryland, 2¾ to 1 3	9620	Italy, ... 173
1829	9620	5025	3865	23534	Virginia, 2¾ to 0 7 Maryland, 4 to 1 6	Stock consisted of	Norw.&Denm. 144
						Virginia, Kentucky, &c. 22419	Port. & Spain, 792
						Maryland,... 1115	Brit. Possess.... 294
						23534	Irish Ports, ... 419
							Use of Navy, .. 43
							Home Trade, 3865
							Do. in Bond.... 558
							8890

Statement of the Quantity of Tobacco imported into Liverpool and the Clyde in 1829, compared with 1828, and the Stock estimated to remain on Hand at the close of each Year.

	Imported in		Stock on 31st Dec.	
	1828.	1829.	1828.	1829.
Liverpool...American...	5980	4900	9200	6400
Clyde.....Virginia.....	681	768	857	860
Hayti	68	—	68	68

† The name by which tobacco is known in America differs in each province; in the Mexican or Aztuk tongue it is called *yetle*; in Algonkin, *sema*; in the Huron, *ayougoua*; in the Peruvian it is *sayri*; in Chiquito, *pais*; in Vilela, *tusup*; Albaja, *nalodagadi*; Moxo, *sabare*; Omagua, *potema*; Tumanac, *cavai*; Maypure, *jema*; and in the Cabre, *sena*; the ancient name in Virginia was *Wopowoc*. The other synonymes

transported to the West Indies; particularly to Cuba, the Tobacco of which is still the most highly prized: and to North America, where it has been most extensively cultivated. One curious circumstance connected with its cultivation in Virginia is worth noticing: the planters, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, being all bachelors, regarded themselves merely as temporary sojourners in the colony; the London Company, which was established in 1606, for the colonization of Virginia, with a view to their steadiness, sent out a number of respectable young women, to supply the settlers with wives. These ladies were actually sold for one hundred and twenty pounds of Tobacco each, being the quantity considered as equivalent to the expenses of the voyage.*

Let us now enquire into the various uses to which Tobacco is applied, and its medicinal properties. It is used, as a luxury, in three ways:—for chewing, smoking, and snuffing.

1. *Chewing Tobacco.* — The origin of this custom has not been traced, but it probably sprung from the desire to extract from the entire Tobacco a substitute for the fermented juice, the *moo*, which has been already noticed. At this day, the women in the province of Varinas, carry this inspissated liquid in "a small box, which they wear like a watch, suspended to one side at the end of a string. Instead of a key, it is furnished with a little spoon, with which they help themselves from time to time of this juice, relishing it in their mouths like

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are *tabac* in French; *tabak* in German, Dutch, and Polish; *tobak* in Swedish and Danish; *tobaco*, Spanish and Portuguese; and *tobacco* in the Italian. In the Oriental languages, it is *tambacu* in Hindostanee; *tamracutta*, in Sanscrit; *pogheielly* in Tamool; *tambracco* in the Malay tongue; *tambracco* in Javanese; *doorkoole* in Cingalese; and *bujjer hony* in Arabic.

* Warden's Statistical Account of the United States, vol. ii. p. 160.

a sweetmeat." * Chewing Tobacco has always been confined chiefly to the lower classes, and seafaring men, whose avocations do not always permit the means of smoking, and who cannot afford to snuff. Habit enables many chewers to swallow the saliva with impunity; although the strong infusion introduced into the alimentary canal, is a virulent sedative poison. The celebrated canon of Saint Victor, Santeuil the poet, fell the victim of a practical joke with Tobacco. He was much distinguished for the liveliness of his disposition and his wit. At one of those entertainments, at which he was a constant guest, some young men, thinking it would be a pleasant jest, made him drink a glass of wine, into which a tobacco-box, filled with Spanish Tobacco, had been emptied. He was suddenly seized with the most violent vomitings, and, in a few hours afterwards, died in the greatest tortures. The saliva of a chewer of Tobacco, when swallowed, affects the stomach nearly in the same manner as Opium, taking off the sensation of hunger, and enabling those who indulge in it to sustain the want of provisions for a great length of time. An anecdote, strikingly illustrative of this fact, was related to the author of this notice by an old gentleman, who, in the early part of his life, was employed in collecting furs, in North America:—Having, with his party, by some accident, lost his path in the woods; the provisions were exhausted, when he fortunately encountered three Indians, who were, also, engaged in hunting. He solicited some provisions from them; but was informed they had none. He then begged for some Tobacco. Alas! there was only one solitary quid in the company, and that was half masticated; but, with the feeling of true benevolence, the Indian took it from his mouth, divided it, and presented one half to the Englishman, who ac-

* Colombia, vol. ii. p. 117.

cepted it; and declared that it was the sweetest morsel he had ever enjoyed. The Tobacco for chewing is Shag Tobacco, cut from Richmond Tobacco, being first wetted, and afterwards dried in a hot pan. What is termed Roll Tobacco is formed into a cord, of a moderate thickness, by depriving the leaf of its veins, moistening it, and after pressing it in a powerful press, so as to extend the oil over the whole equally, twisting it, or, as it is termed, spinning it.

2. *Smoking Tobacco.*—This mode of using Tobacco was known in America, at the period of its discovery by Columbus, and so highly prized that, like the Olive, the *Calumet* was the symbol of peace and concord.* It has been supposed that smoking was unknown in the Old World before the discovery of America, but Mr. Brodigan† has advanced the following evidence against this supposition:—"Herodotus, in lib. 1. s. 36. asserts that the Massagetæ, and all the Scythic nations, had among them certain herbs which they threw into the fire, the ascending smoke of which, the company seated round the fire collected, causing them to dance and sing."‡

* The Calumet or pipe of peace, is a large Tobacco-pipe, with a bulb of polished marble, and a stem two feet and a half long, made of a strong reed, adorned with feathers and locks of women's hair. When it is used in treaties and embassies, the Indians fill the calumet with the best Tobacco, and presenting it to those with whom they have concluded any great affair, smoke out of it after them."—*Harris's Voyages*, fol. 1705., vol. ii. p. 908.

† *Vide* his Treatise on the Tobacco Plant, p. 19.

‡ It is curious to trace the similarity of customs in different countries and eras of the world. In a Report on Virginia, written by Thomas Heriot, servant to Sir Walter Ralegh, we find the following account of Tobacco,—"This uppowoc is of so precious estimation amongst them, that they think their gods are marvellously delighted therewith: whereupon they make hallowed fires, and cast some of the powder therein for sacrifice. Being in a storme upon the waters, to pacify their gods they cast some up into the air and into the water; so a weare for fish being newly set up, they cast some therein and into the air; and also after an escape of danger, they caste some into the air likewise: but all done with strange

Strabo, in lib. vii. 196. also says that, "they had a religious order amongst them, who frequently smoked for recreation, which, according to Pomponius Mela *, a geographical writer in the time of Claudius; and Solinus, c. 15., they received through tubes." The ancient Scythæ smoked narcotic herbs through wooden and earthen tubes; and Mr. Brodigan states, that in the year 1784, some labourers digging at Brannockston, in the county of Kildare, a spot where a battle was fought, in the tenth century, between the Irish and Danes, discovered an ancient "tobacco-pipe sticking between the teeth of a human skull." Many similar pipes, which were of course earthenware, lay scattered among the bones in the stone coffins. But, although the word tobacco-pipe is employed by Mr. Brodigan, yet, there is no evidence to prove that the pipes found on this occasion, which have also been dug up in England, and attributed to the Danes, were used with Tobacco. These facts, however, are sufficient to prove that smoking herbs with a pipe is a very ancient custom. The *Cigar* or *Cheroot* appears to have been first used in the East Indies, although the best Cigars are now brought from the Havannah; and, at this time, are exactly worth their weight in silver in the London market.

There is every reason for believing that smoking Tobacco was introduced into England on the return of Drake's fleet; and, it is asserted, that Sir Walter Ralegh was the pupil of Captain Lane, one of Drake's officers, in the acquirement of this elegant accomplishment. He soon set the fashion; and, in communicating the art to his friends, gave smoking parties at his house, where his guests were treated with nothing but a pipe,

gestures, stamping, sometime dancing, clapping of hands, holding up of hands, and staring up into the heavens, uttering therewithall and chattering strange words and noises." See *Hakluyt's Voyages*, fol. Lond. 1810. vol. iii. p. 324.

* L. c. p. 20.

a mug of ale, and a nutmeg. From the anecdote related in this volume, respecting the weight of smoke, the vapour of the pipe certainly did not throw a cloud over the brilliant wit of the unfortunate Ralegh.

The soothing influence of a pipe has proved so agreeable to men of philosophic and contemplative minds, that smoking may almost be designated the pastime of the sage. Sir Isaac Newton, Hooker, and many other scientific and literary men, might be named as proofs of the truth of this assertion. But on those unaccustomed to it, smoking produces very unpleasant effects, which have sometimes terminated fatally. The first symptoms are elevation of spirits, with an accelerated and strengthened pulse; but this excitement is transient, and is soon followed by vertigo, sickness, fainting, and a weak tremulous pulse, indicating a powerful degree of collapse. Sometimes these symptoms quickly subside, on removing from the atmosphere of the smoking-room; at other times, they have been known to continue for forty-eight hours.* I have an instance of the kind, at this time, under my eye: and Gmelin has related two fatal cases of excessive smoking, in one of which seventeen, and in the other eighteen, pipes were smoked at a sitting.† It is, nevertheless, well known, that some German professors are in the habit of smoking, daily, from fifteen to eighteen pipes, with impunity.

As smoking is a species of distillation, the *Nicotina*, or sedative principle of the Tobacco, being more volatile and less condensable than the essential oil, chiefly comes over with the smoke, and acts upon the nervous energy of the habit through the medium of the lungs. When the quantity is excessive it paralyses the heart, rendering it insensible to the stimulus of the blood, and

* Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal, vol. xii. p. 11.

† Phil. Trans. 1811.

the circulation ceases. The experiments of Mr. Brodie* have demonstrated that the essential oil is more poisonous than the infusion of Tobacco, which contains, like the smoke, the *Nicotina*; but it kills by exciting convulsions and coma, without affecting the heart. This oil accumulates in old tobacco pipes. The poisonous effects of it are thus mentioned by Mr. Barrow:—"A Hottentot applied some of it from the short end of his wooden tobacco-pipe to the mouth of a snake, while darting out his tongue. The effect was instantaneous as an electric shock — with a convulsive motion that was momentary, the snake half untwisted itself, and never stirred more; and the muscles were so contracted, that the whole animal felt hard and rigid, as if dried in the sun."†

The Tobacco most prized for smoking is that reared in Cuba and on the Rio Negro; that of Cumana is the most aromatic. The Havannah cigars are esteemed in every part of the world where smoking is indulged. The coarse, acrid Tobacco chiefly employed by the lower classes of people in the country, is the produce of Virginia; and on the Continent, that of Brazil and of Santa Cruz. Tobacco grown in the East Indies is not much esteemed in Europe. The produce of the Levant is mild and weak, with a sweet or honey-like flavour.

3. *Snuffing Tobacco.* — If smoking have been carried to excess, snuff-taking has been still more abused; although it is questionable, whether any cases of death ever occurred from taking too much snuff.

A collection of snuffs from various parts of the world, and the history of them would form a singular specimen of ingenuity idly exercised, in varying the form and quality of a powder, merely intended for the titillation of one set of nerves. In this country, the snuffs, like the varieties of Sheep and Geraniums, may all be traced

* Phil. Trans. vol. ci. † Travels in Africa, p. 268.

to one stock: the Rapêe, which derives its name from having been originally produced, by rasping what is called a carrot of Tobacco. To form this, the leaves of Tobacco freed from their stems and veins, are fermented and pressed closely together into the shape of a spindle, and retained in that shape by cords wound round them. Scotch snuff, which is, also, the basis of many snuffs, is made from Tobacco, with the midrib and veins left in the leaves, which are first fermented, then dried before a strong fire, and afterwards ground in mills, resembling a large mortar and pestle.

It would be useless to mention half the snuffs that are in fashion. The Rapêe and the Scotch snuff are the bases of the greatest number of them, the variety of flavour being communicated by the admixture of different proportions of the three following: — *Seville* snuff, the best Spanish, made from the Cuba Tobacco; *Macaba* made from Tobacco grown on the banks of the Maracaibo in Venezuela, and called *Tobaco de Sacerdotes;* and *Masulipatam*, made from a very broad-leaved Tobacco; but, of what species it is, the writer of these notices is ignorant. * It has been asserted, that common salt, sal ammoniac, and even ground glass, and other objectionable articles, are added to the Tobacco in the manufacture of snuff: but these admixtures are unknown in this country, if they be employed elsewhere; and the whole art of making snuff depends on the mode of drying the leaves, the degree of fermentation that they have undergone, and the proper admixture of the different varieties. †

Long before the introduction of Tobacco, sneezing powders or sternutatories were in vogue. These had

* The Tobacco cultivated in the East Indies is, in general, not much prized in Europe.

† In a letter from a large manufacturer of Tobacco to the author, is this sentence: "The best method of manufacturing Tobacco or Snuff, is to use good Tobacco, and to clean it of all its impurities as much as possible."

been medicinally employed from the time of Hippocrates; and the use of them had degenerated into a habit with the Irish and some other nations. If the description of a fop by Shakspeare, in his play of Henry the Fourth, refer to Cephalic powder, the custom, probably, also prevailed in England: —

> "He was perfumed like a milliner,
> "And 'twixt his finger and his thumb he held
> "A pouncet-box, which ever and anon
> "He gave his nose." *

Be this as it may, soon after the introduction of Tobacco into England it was very generally employed in the form of snuff by both sexes †; and was allowed even in the royal presence. The gallants of those days, indeed, seem to have been as extravagant in their snuff-boxes, as particular in the nature of their contents, and as affected in the use of them as the silliest of our modern fops. "Before the meat came smoking to the board," says Dekker, "our gallant must draw out his tobacco-box and the ladle for the cold snuff into the nostril, all which artillery may be of gold or silver, if he can reach to the price of it; then let him shew his several tricks in taking it, as the whiff, the ring, &c. for these are complements that gain gentlemen no mean respect." ‡ The custom of raising the snuff with a spoon to the nostrils was not confined, however, to the fop and the courtier; for, as appendages attached to the mull of the Scotch highlander, we find not only a spoon but also a hare's foot to brush the snuff from the upper lip, indicating the excess to which this indulgence was carried. The quantity of snuff taken by many octogenarians of the present day is almost incredible, and only exceeded by the excesses of some of

* Henry IV., Act. i. sc. 4.
† Stowe's Annals.
‡ Gull's Horn Book, pp. 119, 120.

their early contemporaries who have gone before them. The late Arthur Murphy carried his snuff in his waistcoat pocket and used it wholesale; and I have known many literary men, who emptied three or four large boxes in a day. As in the abuse of opium and wine, the indulgence in snuff increases the desire for it, until the habit becomes too deeply fixed to be eradicated; indeed, the power which the animal system possesses of accommodating itself to the excitation of artificial stimulants, is well illustrated by the effects of snuff on the the sensitive nerves of the olfactory organ. In the uninitiated a small pinch produces a stimulant effect, which is communicated by nervous sympathy to the whole of the respiratory system of muscles, which are thrown into convulsive action or sneezing, whereas no quantity is capable of causing this effect on the veteran snuffer, so much does the constant repetition of impression diminish the sensibility and irritability of the Schneiderean membrane. It would be curious to determine whether, in this effect of snuff, the same principle that impresses the odorous sensation on the nerves of smelling, affords the stimulus to those of sensation which cause the sneezing, and the increased action of the pituitary glands to augment the quantity of the lubricating mucus of the organ.

Snuffing, as it is the most frequent and inoffensive to others, is, also, the least injurious manner of using Tobacco as a luxury; although, in those unaccustomed to it, like smoking, it not only causes sneezing, but nausea and vertigo. In great snuffers, the stomach frequently suffers, and dyspeptic symptoms supervene, accompanied with pains and tormina, or a twisting sensation of the bowels. This may arise, in part, from the snuff passing into the pharynx and being swallowed; although it is also possible that it may depend on sympathy. Snuffing is frequently injurious to weak and nervous people; and some physicians, among whom was

the celebrated Lorry, have ascribed to its use the frequent occurrence of nervous diseases. It is, however, unfortunate for this opinion, that in the royal snuff manufactories of France, comprising a population of above 4000 persons, the workmen are not subject to any special diseases, and they live on an average as long as other people*; in addition to the fact, that the most inordinate use of it has not often produced nervous affections.

Snuff, we have said, has been recommended as an errhine or promoter of the discharge of the nostrils in a tendency to apoplexy: but although the quantity of the fluid discharged may cause the depletion of the vessels of the head, yet, on account of its narcotic quality, snuff ought to be employed with caution; and as we occasionally see great snuff-takers seized with apoplexy and palsy on suddenly leaving off its use, there is sufficient reason for regarding it as a less proper errhine than many other substances.

The hints that have been given of some of the medicinal properties of Tobacco leave little to be said on this head. Its medicinal qualities were early known; it was named Herba panacea, and was admitted into the Materia Medica in France in 1562: and, probably, the abuse of it as a medicine gave rise to many of the objections to its introduction into general use, which were afterwards nurtured by prejudice and falsehood. We observe the credulity of its evil effects carried to an absurd length in the Counterblaste to which we have already referred: — "It makes," says the royal author, "a kitchen, also, oftentimes in the inward parts of men, soyling and infecting them with an unctuous and oily kind of soote, as hath been found in some great tobacco takers, that after their death were opened." And not

* Annales d'Hygiène Publique et de Med. Leg. i. 169. 1829.

† The Workes of King James, folio. p. 221.

less strong is the prejudice displayed in the following opinion of a man of superior intellect, the celebrated author of the Anatomy of Melancholy.—"A good vomit I confesse; a vertuous herbe, if it be well qualified, opportunely taken, and medicinally used; but as it is commonly used by most men, which take it as tinkers do ale, 'tis a plague, a mischiefe, a violent purger of goods, lands, health; hellish, develish, damned tobacco; the ruin and overthrow of body and soule."* The medicinal properties of Tobacco are, nevertheless, considerable; it induces narcotic, sedative, emetic, cathartic, diuretic, and errhine effects, according to the manner of administering it and the extent of the dose. Its active principles are, undoubtedly, the *Nicotina*, and *the essential Oil which it contains*; before, therefore, noticing its medicinal and poisonous qualities, let us understand the nature of these principles separated from the plant.

Nicotina, when pure, is a colourless substance, having an acrid taste, and the odour that distinguishes Tobacco: it resembles, in some respects, the volatile oils, is volatile, and soluble in water and alcohol, forming solutions which have the taste and odour of Nicotina. When tincture of Galls is added to these solutions, the Nicotina is precipitated. Applied to the nostrils it causes the most violent sneezing, and is also extremely poisonous when swallowed. It is procured from Tobacco by a very operose process.†

The *Essential Oil* of Tobacco is of a green colour, hot and pungent to the taste, and a virulent poison. It is procured by the distillation of the leaves.

To determine the mode in which Tobacco affects the living frame, Dr. Wilson Philip made a number of experiments, with a strong aqueous infusion of it, on frogs. He found that when it was introduced into the heart,

* Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, p. 235. vol. i.

† Vide Annales de Chimie, t. 71. p. 139.

this organ immediately became paralytic, and that the same state occurs when it is applied directly to the brain, or when thrown into the stomach and intestines. He thence concluded, that in every instance it acts only through the medium of the brain, to which it is conveyed by the blood.* Some subsequent experiments of Professor Macartney of Dublin, have, however, demonstrated, that it is on the extremities of the nerves that Tobacco acts with most energy †; and the still more convincing investigations of Mr. Brodie ‡, afford every reason for thinking that Tobacco operates in two distinct ways, according to the form in which it is used. When a strong infusion was introduced into the intestines of a dog, it killed the animal in ten minutes, by paralysing the heart, which was evident from arterial blood being found in the aortal cavities after death; but when the essential oil was employed, convulsions and coma were excited, and death followed without the heart being affected. The same symptoms presented themselves when the oil was applied to the tongue of a young cat; and the powerful influence of it is well illustrated by the account of its effects on a snake, which we have quoted from Barrow's Travels. Now, as the only active principles contained in Tobacco, are *Nicotina* and the *Essential Oil*, we are disposed to regard the former as a direct sedative, which acts chiefly on the sentient extremities of the motor nerves, and the latter as a powerful stimulant, operating through the influence of the brain and spinal marrow. Is it the Essential Oil that causes the primary or stimulant effects of Tobacco, and the Nicotina that induces the depression and collapse that follow? Experiments are still required to determine this point.

* Treatise on Febrile Diseases, Winchester, 1804. vol. 4th. Appendix pp. 708 — 716.

† Orfila, Traité des Poisons, vol. ii. partie 1. p. 251.

‡ Phil. Trans. loc. cit.

Notwithstanding these violent effects of Tobacco, it is a useful medicine, under judicious management. Its fumes, when smoked, are narcotic, relieving the difficulty of breathing in spasmodic asthma, and allaying the pain of toothache; and Humboldt states, that it is employed in South America, by the higher classes, to facilitate the sieste after dinner. The very sickness and debility which it causes are taken advantage of, to relieve incarcerated hernia, ileus, and obstinate constrictions, by introducing either the smoke or the infusion into the intestines when other remedies fail. The infusion has been employed as an emetic, but the practice is very dangerous; and even its employment, in small doses, as a diuretic, in dropsical affections, advised by Dr. Fowler, cannot be much commended. In one spasmodic affection, however, connected with the secretion of the kidney, its influence is taken advantage of, when the patient is not of a delicate habit of body. It is not unfrequently employed by the unprofessional, as an external application in cutaneous eruptions, and especially in ring-worm of the head (Porrigo *Scutulata*); but we have witnessed the most violent sickness, giddiness, and alarming fainting, follow the use of a Tobacco lotion; and there is much danger if the skin be abraded. In the Oroonoko the natives apply chewed tobacco to the bite of poisonous snakes.*

For the purposes of internal administration, the London College of Physicians order a drachm of Tobacco to be macerated for an hour, in a pint of water; but, even in this degree of strength, the infusion sometimes produces violent effects. Instances are recorded of two drachms, instead of one drachm, of the leaves being employed, and proving fatal.† The Edinburgh

* Humboldt's Personal Narrative.

† Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journ. vol. iii. p. 129.

College orders a wine of Tobacco, which may be given in doses of from ten to thirty drops; and a syrup of it is employed on the Continent. Like every other powerful medicine, Tobacco may be rendered available of much good, when prescribed with judgment and discrimination; but it becomes a most frightful weapon in the hands of the ignorant and indiscreet.

From the effects of the tincture of galls in producing an insoluble and consequently inert compound with Nicotina, galls, either in infusion or tincture, should be administered in instances of poisoning by overdoses of Tobacco, under any form in which it is taken into the stomach; whilst, at the same time, ammonia, brandy, and other stimulants, are requisite to rouse the depressed energies of the nervous system. When the danger is pressing, the respiration should be supported by artificial means, and kept up until the narcotic influence of the poison is exhausted.

Such is the nature of this potent herb; and such have been the origin and dissemination of Tobacco: an object of secondary importance as respects the life of Ralegh; but yet so familiar, and productive of such important results, as to awaken general curiosity regarding it. The arms of the Romans spread the arts of civilized life among the untutored nations over whom they triumphed: the enterprize of one of their conquered provinces, a thousand years after the overthrow of their empire, transported an insignificant herb, from the western hemisphere, whose influence has extended over nations the existence of which was unknown to the masters of the world. Among the Indian tribes, the calumet is the symbol of the peace and concord of nations; in Christendom, the powder of the herb that confers its charm, is that of amicable intercourse and social amity between man and man: its smoke, rising in

clouds from the idolatrous altar of the native Mexican, opened the world of spirits to his delirious imagination: to the inhabitants of the opposite hemisphere, whilst it has furnished the means of encouraging folly, pampering luxury, and waging war; it has, at the same time, contributed to lessen the sum of human misery by allaying pain; and even assisted in extending the boundaries of intellect by aiding the contemplations of the Christian philosopher.

NOTE C.

Letter from Sir Robert Cecil from the Tower at Dartmouth, 21st September, 1592. *

Good Mr. Vice Chamberlaine,

As soon as I came on boarde the Carick on Wednesday at one of clock, with the rest of Her Majesty's commissioners, within one halfe houre Sir Walter Ralegh arrived with hys keper Mr. Blunt; I assure you, Sir, hys poore servants, to the nomber of 140 goodly men, and all the mariners, came to him with such shouts and joy as I never saw a man more troubled to quiet them in my life. But his hart is broken, for he is very extreamly pensive longer then he is busied, in w^{h} he can toil terribly. But if you dyd heare him rage at the spoiles, finding all the short wares utterly devoured, you would laugh, as I do w^{n} I can not choose. The meeting betweene him and Sir John Gilbert, was with teares on S^{r} John's part; and he, belike finding it is knowen he hath a keper, whensoever he is saluted with congratulations for liberty, he doth answer no, I am stylle y^{e} Queen

* The Letter contained in the Appendix are copied from the State Paper Office, and now for the first time printed.

of England's poore captive. I wished him to conceale it, because here it diminisheth his credite, w^h I do vowe to you before God is greater amongst the mariners than I thoght for: I do grace him as much as I may, for I find him merveilously greedy to do any thing to recover y^e conceit of his brutish offence. I have examined Sir John Gilbert by oths, and all his, who I find cleare I protest to you in most men's opinions. His heart was so great tyll his brother was at lyberty, as he never came bnt once to the towre, and never was aboord her; but now he is sworne, he doth sett all whotly abroad to hunt out others, and informs us dayly by his spies wherein he would not be so bold if he cold have been more touched, w^h I assure you on my fayth I do think him wronged in this, howsoever in others he may have done like a Devonshyre man. We have worth y^e looking on to-day, of w^h I have written to her M^y. Ratt's whyte and blacke, drink like smoke in tast; and as, God help me, I brought so little provision for long tarrying, as I pray God I come home without quick cattell; give me leave to be merry with you, for if I were whypped, I must w^h my friends be bold, in w^h nomber I account you; but if you restaure me not in the good thoughts of her mynd whose angelicall quality works straunge influences in the harts of a cople of servants, according to their generall mouldings, actume est de amicitia. From Dartmouth towre, where I am lodged, this 21 7bre 1592.

Your loveing poore frend,

Ro. Cecyll.

Good Mr. Vice Chamberlaine, be good to my sorrowfull poore Bess y^r cosin.

I shall bring, by informations, of great booties of Sir John Borough and others.

NOTE D.

Letter from Ralegh to Cobham.

I HAVE sent your Lordship such news as cam to me from above, and your Lordship letter to my Lord treasorer agayne. It was brought me by the post at midnight, and I opened it in a badd light, and half asleep, and thynkyng it had been to my self. I hope y^r^ Lordship will be here to-morrow or on Saturday, or else my wife says her oysters will be all spilt, and her partridge stale. If your Lordship cannot come friday, I will wait on you wher you are. I pray send me word if you go to Lyme or Melplashe that I may attend you, for a friday I shall dispatch my busyness with the justices here, for about those rogges the Meers, whereof the elder hath been at Court to complain, and brought my Lord Thomas to Mr. Secretary to deal for him, the younger Mr. Sec^y^ hath now sent for by pursuivant, and if it had not been to have sent for information agaynst him, I had been with your L.p. this morning. I fear that my Cornish men did not repair to your Lordship to do you service because your passage was so suddyn, but I am sure you have had an ill jurney. I pray your Lordship to send us word where you have taken up the house at Bath or no, that we may send thither.

Your L. ever and wholly to comand,

W. R.

Bess remembers herself to your L.ship, and says your breach of promise shall make you fare accordingly.

The ships of the South Sea that are of Holland is passed by, and none of ours stayd her, with a lanterne of clean gold in her stern, and arrived at Amsterdam infinite rich. Mr. Mansfield hath been abroad to great purpose. The Queen is removed to Wan House on Fri-

day, and from thence to Knowles's to Readyng, where further it is not yet resolved.

(No date. Addressed, To Lord Cobham, Warden of the Cinque Ports.)

Note E.

Letter from Raleigh to Cobham, written during the last progress made by Queen Elizabeh.

To the right honorabell the very good lord y^e^ Lorde Cobhame.

I, THAT know your Lordshipp's resolution when wee parted, cannot take on me to persuade you; I wyll only say thys much, it is butt a day and half jurney hither, the Queen will take it exceedyng kyndley, and take herself more beholding unto you than you think. The french tarry but 2 or 3 days at most. I will presently returne to the bathe with your L.shipe agayne; the frenche were all blacke, and no braverye at all, so I have only made me a blacke taffeta sute, and leve all my other sutes; this is all I can say, saving I only wysh you a littell to beare and make the Queene so much the more in your debt; it will be friday er they have adience; it would be long to tell you of the Queen's discourse with me of your Lordship, and finding it, I durst not say that I knew you were resolved not to come, but leff it to the estate of your boddy. I need not doubt but that your L. will believe that I wish you to hold such a course as may best fitt your honor and your humor together; if you come she will take it most kyndly, if you come not it shall be handled as you will have it, and herein and all else I will remayne yours before all the world.

W. RALEGH.

Basyng, this Saturday nigght: late.

I am even now going all night to London, to provide a plaine taffeta sute, and a plaine blacke saddle, and will be here agayne Tuesday night; and if your Frenche jirney hold, it will much glad you for them to know that you are here, for I am resolved that the Queen will most esteem you here and use you.

NOTE F.

Letter from Lord Grey to King James.

No date: probably 1603.

BY every one that cometh from your Majesty, I gather thus much of your deep displeasure, that I protest (*I am*) neer desperade of favour; life and liberty grow odious, and hope only remaineth by my blood to cleer the obstruction my sighs could not breath out, and by death to rid myself of torment. Once only give me leave in theas bitter agonies to expostulate with you, eaven my king: thinketh your Maj^ty^, that beecaus I never yeeld, for my soul is cleer to intend your royall hurt, that thearfore I justify myself, extenuate your mercy, or dy not in contrition as much as flesh and blood can suffer? *Quid ergo? Indistincta hæc defensio et promiscua elabitur? Immo Justis terminus dividatur:* punishe my offences, which I now feel, and confess of such nature, as to-morrow cut of my head, I will say you are but just. But of necessity, becaus of my infinite folly, must I intend treason against your sacred person? What, I beseech your Ma^ty^ should bee my ends? Not religion, for they were papists: not ambition, for thear was not one, one whome I might trust, but rather that I knew would seeke my ruine: Beesides their own confessions are that I renounced the action: Judg then

as you pleas: *tibi enim finum rerum judicium dii dedere, nobis obsequii gloria relicta est:* this only must I feal with my death, however mine ey was in discerning, mine heart was never false in assenting to your perills: An offence yet soe great, as I shun not to dy, only for the antiquity of soe noable a race, for soe much unstained blood as have spilt in the heads of your auncestor's armies, for 400 yeers' loyalty, during which time the hous of Wilton hath florished untoucht: for mine own zeal to your princely self, which this deliverer knows, would have poured forth my life blood in defence of your right to this royale seat, let not one wreched offence in youth, though I dy, stain my heart, my hous, with treasonous intent. Your mercy allready is admirable to the world; to your self, (eaven in offences neer this nature) and not repented; not unprospered with future and most faithful loyalty, many have tasted it, all, with joy, admire it. Must I bee the only example of justice? If serviceable, if pleasing to you, in whose displeasure I desire not to live, it is welcum; I neither shun, nor protract it, but while I live will love, and honour you, and, when I dy, will bless you with the faithfullest prayers, and most contrite penitency of your Majestie's most devote, loving, and loyale subject and servant,

GREY.

NOTE G.

Postscript to a Letter from Ralegh to Cobham.

MY Lord Viscount Cecyl so exalted Meere's suit agaynst mee in my absence as not allowing Mr. Serjint Henlie, nor any else could be heard for mee, to stay trialls whilst I was out of the land in her Majestie's service — a right in curtesy afforded to every beggar. I never bussied myself with the Viscount, neither of his

extortions, or poysoning of hys wife. As it is here averred, I have forborne him in respect to my Lord Thomas; and chiefly because of Mr. Secretary, who in his love to my Lord Thomas hath wished me to it, but I will not endure wrong at so peevish a fool's hand any longer, I will rather lose my life, and I think that my Lord Puritan Periam doth think that the Queen shall have greater use of rogges and villaines than of me, or else he would at Bindon's instance have yielded to my actions, being out of the land.

NOTE H.

Letter from the Lieutenant of the Tower to Cecyll. Signed John Peyton.

July 30. 1603.

RIGHT honourable my very good lord, S^r^ Walter Rawley his hurte wyll be w^ll^n * these two days pfectly hoole; he dothe styll contyneue pplexed at you leffte him, he is desirous to have M^r^ heriot com to hym, wherin I cannot conceyve any inconveniencie if it shall so stand with the LL^d^ † their honorable pleasures. My Lord Cobham his spirites ar exceding muche declyned, he is growne passionate in lamentatyon and sorrowe, his only hoope is in his Maj^tie's^ mercye, and y^r^ mediation. I am exceeding gladde to heare that my good friend S^r^ George harvye shall succeed me in this place whom I will assisste in all thinges that shall be w^hin my power. Y^r^ Lordships honorable favours I wyll ever acknowledge and shal seeke to meryt them w^the^ my beste servynge, moste humbly taking my leave. Towere, this 30 July 1603.

You L.^ships^ ever bound,

JOHN PEYTON.

Postscript.

* Within. † Lords.

NOTE I.

Sir W. Wade to Cecil. "*Endorsed to me*" *in Cecil's hand-writing.*

Aug. 27. 1603.

To the r. h. my especiall good L. &c.

IT may please your good Lordship, Keymis, servant to S^r^ Walter Raleygh, sent this declaration ready written of his own hand, to y^r^ Lieutenant, my self being then w^th^ him at the Tower, after my Lord Henry Howard was gon from thence, wherby your Lordship may perceave how after so obstinate a resolution of sylence he beginnethe at the lengthe to speake, and I doubt not, havinge now opened the hatche of his closet, he will be lesse reserved, and more willing to utter that is behind.

NOTE K.

From Sir W. Waad to Lord Cecyll.

Aug. 3. 1603.

Y^t^ it may pleas yo^r^ good L. I send yo^r^ L. y^e^ declaracions of S^r^ Walter Rawley and the L. Gray: By the L. Grays it doth plainly appeare he had a plot, a parti, and confiderats; for in the beginning he confisseth as much, and after saith he used these speeches to Mr. Brooke, desiring that hee to his would not discloss mee, neither would I once name him to myne. Mr. Brooke is taking the like course, wherrin I wished him to be before and not behind the rest, as well in ample declaracion as in time, which I thinck he will performe. This may give further occasion of new questions to be demanded of them, and so greatt knowledg and certainty had of this plotte. My L. Gray is now confissed. S^r^

Walter Rawley was ordinarily thriss a week with the L. Cobham, what their conferencies were none but themselves doe knowe. But Mr. Brooke confidently thincketh what his brother knows was known to y_e other. Mi L. Gray desireth Mr. Lieutenant and me to send this Letter to yo. L. (He then proceeds to say, that Pennicock's declaration toucheth chiefly Lord Cobham. The rest of this letter refers to some suit on the part of Sir W. Waad to the King for the fulfilment of some grant given by her late Majesty, but unperfected.)

Note O.

Endorsed in Cecil's hand-writing. "*My Letter to my Lord Grey.*"

Probably Aug. 1603.

Till my Lords (on whom I attend by his Maj^{ty} order) have spoken w^{h} the King, I can say nor more then this, that I have neither power nor purpose to proceede in this, but by their dyrection who have more iudgment and longer interest in matters of justice and honour then I have, without whom, whylst I doe nothing, I assure myself you will neither doubt nor myslisk the proceedings, for they doe both know what is iust, what is honour, and wish y^{e} innocency, howsoever envy or malice may have distracted your conceipt of my disposition,

That am your Lord. friend.

Note P.

Letter from Hen. Cobham addressed to the Ryght Ho. my very Good Lord the Erle of Nottingham Lord High Admiral, the Erle of Suffolk, Lord Chamberlain, y. lord Cisell, His Ma'tie's principall Secretarie.

My very good Lords,—So low is my poor estat at this present y^t^ no reequitell for y^r^ favours can I promis, but while I breath will pray for God ever to assist you and keepe you from afflixon w^h^ my soule in y^d^ highest degre is moved of. Out of charitie this I humbly pray of your Lordships that I might speak with you all 3, you shall be a means therby to send me in peac to y^e^ grave, the bottom of my hart I will disclos unto you which to no living creature but to yourselfs I will do. God send you all as great comfort as my afflixon is great; and go to God's protection do I with you. From my prison in y^e^ Tour this Tuesday morning.

Yo^r^ Lordships poore afflicted frend,

Henry Cobham.

Oct. 1603.

Letter from George Brooke to Cecyle.

Nov. 18. 1603.

She that lovd me and whose memorie you yeat love, beholding from heaven the extreme calamitye of her father's howse. Shalle I need say any more after this? 'tis alle but weake, if I pray you to cancell injuries past, you have promised to do so, and I believe that if I promise you any thinge of myself, you may truly say you need it not nor care for it: Therfore I must stande onely upon yo^r^ free disposition, and shal be so much the more asured bycausse nothinge binds you. Leave now I beseeche your L^p^ to be nice, and sticke not to dissever

yourself in my relief. But above alle give me leave to conjure you to deale directly with me, what I am to expect, after so many promises receaved, and so much conformitie and accepted service performed on my part to you.

Your Lordships' brother
in law to command
G. Brooke.

Note Q.

The portion of this Letter in p. 265 is an extract, the rest referring to arrangements for the management of the prisoners. It is dated Nov. 13. 1603. and contains the first minute and authentic account of this journey that has been published. *See* p. 265.

Note R.

Letter of Sir W. Ralegh to King James I.

1603, or 4.

May it please your most excellent Majesty, I was of late sent unto for the seale of the Dutchy of Cornwall, which together with the office of Warden and Chancellour, I received at the hands of my late sovereign. This seale appertaineth not to me to dispose, but to your Ma^jy only, and therefore I have entreated my L. Cecyll to present the same, for myself I have interest in nothing but your Ma^jes mercy onely. God knowes what faith I do, and have ever born your Ma^jy, move your imperiall heart to perfect your graces begun. If I bee here restrained untill the powers both of my body and mind shall bee so

infeebled, as I cannot hope to do your Ma^jy some acceptable and extraordinary service, whereby I may truly approve my Faith and intentions to my Sovereign, Lord God doth know that then it had bin happiest for me to have died long since. For the everliving God doth bear me record, that it is to no other chief end, that I desire to live a day. I most humbly beseech your Ma^jy, even for the love of our lord Jesus, to think that I can never forget the Mercies of the King, who hath vouchsafed to lift me out of the grave, being then friendless, lost, and forsaken of all men. Pardon mee, most renowned King. But to say this much, that if it please your Ma^jy to have compassion of me, while I have yet limbs and eyes, that your Ma^jy shall never have cause to accuse, or repent your Ma^jies mercy towards me, beseeching the Lord of all Power and Justice to strike me with the greatest misery of Body and Soul, when I shall not remain a most faithfull, and humble, and gratefull Vassall.

Note S.

To the Queen's most excellent Maiestie.

I did lately presume to send unto your Maiestie the coppie of a letter written to my Lord Treasorer touching Guiana, that there is nothing done therein I could not but wounder with the world, did not the mallice of the world exceede the wisedome thereof. In mine owne respect, the everliving God doth witness that I never sought such an imployment, for all the gold in the earth could not invite me to travell after miserie and death, both which I had bine likeler to have overtaken in that voyage than to have returned from it; but the desire

that led me, was the approving of my fayth to his Maiestie, and to have done him such a service as hath seldome bine pformed for any king. But, most excellent Princes, although his Maiestie do not so much love himself for the present as to accept of that riches which God have offred him, therby to take all presumption from his enemies, arising from the want of treasor, by which (after God) all States are defended: yet it may be that his Maiestie will consider more deiply therof hereafter, if not to late, and that the dissolution of his humble vassall do not preceede his Maiestie's resolution therein; for my extreeme shortnes of breath doth grow so fast on me, with the dispayre of obtayning so much grace to walke with my keeper up the hill withine the tower, as it makes me resolve that God hath otherwise disposed of that busenes and of me, who after eight yeers imprissonment am as strayghtly lokt up as I was the first day, and the punishment dew to other mens extreame negligence layd altogether upon my patience and obedience. In which respect, most worthy Princes, it were a sute farr more fitting the hardnes of my destinie (who every day suffer and am subiect every day to suffer for other mens offences) rather to desire to dye once for all, and therby to give end to the miseries of this life, than to strive against the ordinance of God, who is a trew judge of my innocence towards the king, and doth know me,

for your Maiestie's most
humble and most
bound vassall
W. Ralegh.

NOTE U.

Document signed. Addressed to Cecil. Endorsed, in Cecil's hand-writing "The Judgment of Sir W. Ralegh's case."

SIR WALTER RALEGH'S complayning is in this maner: All his lefte syde is extreme cold, out of senss, or motion, or num. His fingers on the same syde beginning to be contracted, and his tong taken in sum parte in so mych that he spheketh wekely and it is to be feared he may utterly lose the use of it. peter turner, Doctor of phisick, in respect of these circumstances, to speke lyke a physitian, it were good for hym if it myght stand with your Honore's lykyng that he were removed from the cold lodgyng where he now lyeth unto a warmer, that is to say, a litle roome, which he hath bilt in the garden adjoynyng to his stilhouse. (No date.)

NOTE Y.

Since the preceding letters were transcribed, this document was discovered. It is curious, as showing the interest which Queen Elizabeth took in Ralegh.

From Q. Elizth. to Her Vice Roy in Ireland 1582. By the Queene.

RIGHT trusty and well beloved we greet you well. Wher we be given to understand that Captain Appesley is not longe since deceased and the band of footmen which he had committed now to James Fenton: for that as we are informed said Fenton hath otherwise an entertainment by a certain ward under his charge, but chiefly for that our pleasure is to have our servant Walter Rawley trained some longer time in that our realm for his better

experience in martiall affairs, and for the speciall care we have to do him good in respect of hys kyndred that have served us some of them (as you know) neer about our parson; theise are to requier you that the leading of the said bande may be committed to the said Rawley, and for that he is for somme considerations by us excused to staye heere, ourè pleasure is that the said bande shall be in the meane tyme till he repair into that our realm delivered to somme sooche as he shall depute to be his lieutenant there. Given at our Manor of Greenewiche—the —— April 1582 — 24 year of our Reign.

THE END.

LONDON:
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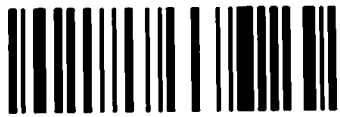
New-Street-Square.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